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## Interim Members' Guide

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**Information for Members on indemnities, benefits,  
allowances, services and interparliamentary relations**



©April 2012

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# Introduction

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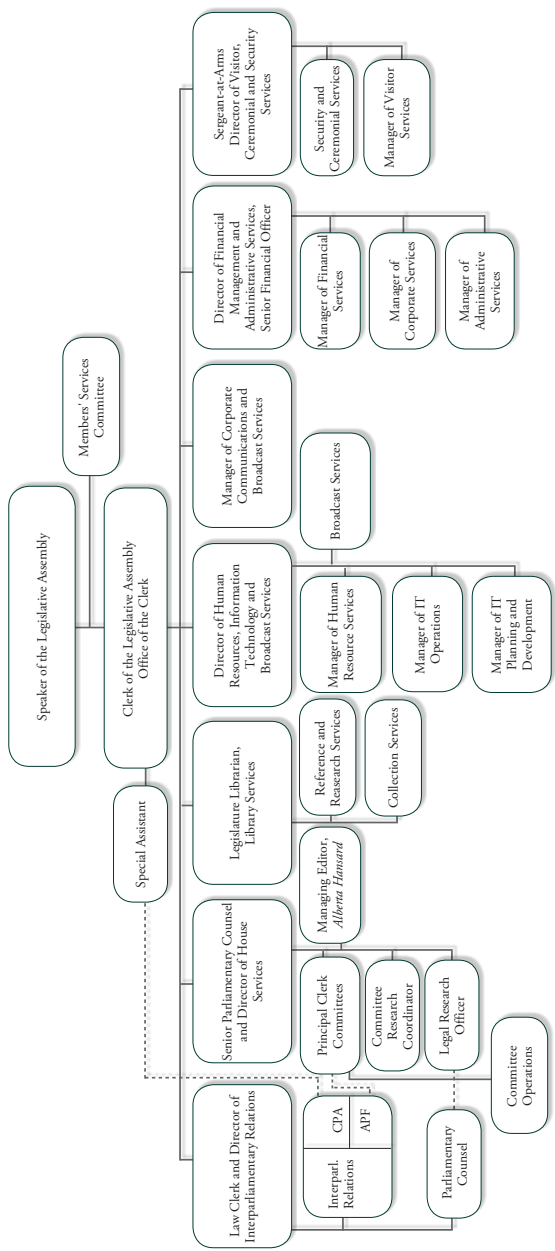
I am pleased to provide you with this Members' Guide, which provides Members of the Legislative Assembly with a single reference for frequently required information. It includes information on the services available to Members, including remuneration, benefits and allowances.

Inquiries regarding information in this guide should be directed to the appropriate managers, whose names and contact information are listed in the directory.

Much of the information within this document changes routinely and should be checked against original sources. The Assembly's website ([www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca)) and intranet site (<http://ourhouse>) are also excellent sources of current information.

The Honourable Ken Kowalski  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

April 2012



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## Directory

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For detailed, up-to-date contact information for Members and staff please consult PeopleFind on the Legislative Assembly Office's intranet site at <http://ourhouse> and the Legislative Assembly of Alberta's website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca)

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## Mailing Addresses

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### Legislature Building

---

10800 – 97th Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6 (Premier's Office: T5K 2B7)

### Legislature Annex

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9718 – 107th Street NW  
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

### Pedway Mall

---

10820 – 98 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2N6

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## Caucus Offices

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### Progressive Conservative Caucus Office

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Main line ..... 780.427.1800

### Alberta Liberal Caucus Office

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Main line ..... 780.427.2292  
or ..... 780.427.2293

### Wildrose Caucus Office

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Main line ..... 780.638.3505

### New Democrat Party Caucus Office

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Main line ..... 780.415.1800

### Alberta Caucus Office

---

Main line ..... 780.427.2298

## Legislative Assembly Office

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**Legislature Information Line** ..... **780.427.2826**  
Website: [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca)

### Office of the Speaker

---

Hon. Ken Kowalski  
325 Legislature Building  
Phone ..... 780.427.2464  
Fax ..... 780.422.9553

### Office of the Clerk

---

801 Legislature Annex (outside session)  
313 Legislature Building (during session)  
Phone ..... 780.427.2478  
Fax ..... 780.427.5688

#### Clerk of the Assembly

Dr. David McNeil ..... 780.427.1347  
[david.mcneil@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:david.mcneil@assembly.ab.ca)

### Communications Services

---

801 Legislature Annex  
Phone ..... 780.427.1653  
Fax ..... 780.427.5688

#### Manager, Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services

Rhonda Sorensen ..... 780.427.1653  
[rhonda.sorensen@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:rhonda.sorensen@assembly.ab.ca)

### Broadcast Services

---

801 Legislature Annex  
Fax ..... 780.427.5688

#### Director, Human Resources, Information Technology and Broadcast Services

Cheryl Scarlett ..... 780.427.1368  
[cheryl.scarlett@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:cheryl.scarlett@assembly.ab.ca)

#### Manager, Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services

Rhonda Sorensen ..... 780.427.1653  
[rhonda.sorensen@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:rhonda.sorensen@assembly.ab.ca)

### House Services

---

Senior Parliamentary Counsel and Director of House Services  
Shannon Dean ..... 780.427.1345  
[shannon.dean@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:shannon.dean@assembly.ab.ca)

### Committee Services

801 Legislature Annex  
Fax ..... 780.427.5688  
[committees@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:committees@assembly.ab.ca)

**Journals/Table Research**

801 Legislature Annex (outside session)  
 315 Legislature Building (during session)  
 Phone . . . . . 780.422.3949  
 Fax (outside session) . . . . . 780.427.5688  
 Fax (during session) . . . . . 780.422.1757

**Hansard**

1001 Legislature Annex  
 Fax . . . . . 780.427.1623

**Managing Editor**

Liz Sim . . . . . 780.427.1875  
 liz.sim@assembly.ab.ca

**Legal Services/Interparliamentary Relations**

801 Legislature Annex (outside session)  
 414 and 416 Legislature Building (during session)  
 Phone . . . . . 780.422.4837  
 Fax . . . . . 780.427.0744

**Law Clerk and Director of Interparliamentary Relations**

**Robert Reynolds, QC** . . . . . 780.427.1346  
 rob.reynolds@assembly.ab.ca

**Senior Parliamentary Counsel and Director of House Services**

Shannon Dean . . . . . 780.427.1345  
 shannon.dean@assembly.ab.ca

**Human Resource Services**

901 Legislature Annex  
 Phone . . . . . 780.427.1364  
 Fax . . . . . 780.427.6436

**Director, Human Resources, Information  
 Technology and Broadcast Services**

Cheryl Scarlett . . . . . 780.427.1368  
 cheryl.scarlett@assembly.ab.ca

**Manager, Human Resource Services**

Moyra Johnson . . . . . 780.427.1521  
 moyra.johnson@assembly.ab.ca

**Financial Management and Administrative Services**

901 Legislature Annex  
 Phone . . . . . 780.427.2477  
 Fax . . . . . 780.415.1714

**Director and Senior Financial Officer**

Scott Ellis . . . . . 780.427.1566  
 Fax . . . . . 780.415.1714  
 scott.ellis@assembly.ab.ca

**Manager, Corporate Services**

Jacqueline Breault ..... 780.427.1359  
jacqueline.breault@assembly.ab.ca

**Manager, Administrative Services**

Dan Dunlop ..... 780.427.1361  
dan.dunlop@assembly.ab.ca

**Manager, Financial Services**

Darren Joy ..... 780.427.1356  
darren.joy@assembly.ab.ca

**Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services**

---

412 Legislature Building ..... 780.422.9259

**Director and Sergeant-at-Arms**

Brian Hodgson ..... 780.427.6048  
Fax ..... 780.415.5829  
brian.hodgson@assembly.ab.ca

**Visitor Services**

Pedway Mall 10820 – 98th Avenue  
Phone ..... 780.427.7362  
Fax ..... 780.427.0980  
School at the Legislature (classroom) ..... 780.415.8174  
Interpretive Centre and Gift Shop ..... 780.422.3982

**Manager of Visitor Services**

Diane Brayman ..... 780.427.1630  
diane.brayman@assembly.ab.ca

**Library Services**

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216 Legislature Building

**Legislature Librarian**

Valerie Footz ..... 780.427.0202  
Fax ..... 780.427.6016  
val.footz@assembly.ab.ca

Reference Desk ..... 780.427.2473

**Information Technology Services**

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901 Legislature Annex  
Phone ..... 780.422.1680  
Fax ..... 780.415.1714

**Director, Human Resources, Information Technology and Broadcast Services**

**Cheryl Scarlett** ..... 780.427.1368  
cheryl.scarlett@assembly.ab.ca

**Help Desk** ..... 780.422.1680

**Manager, Planning and Development**

Val Rutherford ..... 780.427.1586  
 val.rutherford@assembly.ab.ca

**Manager, IT Operations**

Jillian Tilley ..... 780.415.2898  
 jillian.tilley@assembly.ab.ca

## Officers of the Legislature

### Office of the Auditor General

**website** ..... [www.oag.ab.ca](http://www.oag.ab.ca)  
**e-mail** ..... [info@oag.ab.ca](mailto:info@oag.ab.ca)

**Edmonton Office**

8th Floor, 9925 – 109th Street T5K 2J8

Phone ..... 780.427.4222

Fax ..... 780.422.9555

**Calgary Office**

#820, 600 - 6th Avenue SW T2P 0S5

Phone ..... 403.297.6451

Fax ..... 403.297.5195

### Office of the Ombudsman

**website** ..... [www.ombudsman.ab.ca](http://www.ombudsman.ab.ca)

**Edmonton Office**

Suite 2800, 10303 Jasper Avenue NW T5J 5C3

Phone ..... 780.427.2756

Fax ..... 780.427.2759

**Calgary Office**

Suite 2560, 801 - 6th Avenue SW T2P 3W2

Phone ..... 403.297.6185

Fax ..... 403.297.5121

### Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

**website** ..... [www.elections.ab.ca](http://www.elections.ab.ca)

**e-mail** ..... [info@elections.ab.ca](mailto:info@elections.ab.ca)

Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway Avenue NW T5G 2Y5

Phone ..... 780.427.7191

Fax ..... 780.422.2900

### Office of the Ethics Commissioner

**website** ..... [www.ethicscommissioner.ab.ca](http://www.ethicscommissioner.ab.ca)

**e-mail** ..... [generalinfo@ethicscommissioner.ab.ca](mailto:generalinfo@ethicscommissioner.ab.ca)

Suite 1250, 9925 – 109th Street NW T5K 2J8  
Phone ..... 780.422.2273  
Fax ..... 780.422.2261

### **Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner**

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**website** ..... [www.oipc.ab.ca](http://www.oipc.ab.ca)  
**e-mail** ..... [generalinfo@oipc.ab.ca](mailto:generalinfo@oipc.ab.ca)

#### **Edmonton Office**

410, 9925 – 109th Street NW T5K 2J8  
Phone ..... 780.422.6860  
Fax ..... 780.422.5682

#### **Calgary Office**

Suite 2460, 801 6 Avenue SW  
Calgary AB, T2P 3W2  
Phone ..... 403.297.2728  
Fax ..... 403.297.2711

### **Office of the Child and Youth Advocate**

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**website** ..... [www.advocate.gov.ab.ca](http://www.advocate.gov.ab.ca)

#### **Provincial Office (Edmonton)**

805 Peace Hills Trust Tower  
10011 109 Street T5J 3S8  
Phone ..... 780.422.6056

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## **Other Facilities and Services**

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### **Legislature Building**

---

**Loading Dock** ..... 780.427.7450

**Building Maintenance/Property Management** ..... 780.427.7453

**Legislature Mail Room** ..... 780.427.7194

#### **Legislature Cafeteria**

120 Legislature Building  
Phone ..... 780.420.9994

## Legislature Annex Building

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<b>Loading Dock</b> .....	780.422.4992
<b>Building Maintenance/Property Management</b> .....	780.427.7452

## Meeting Room Bookings

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### Legislature Building

Carillon Room, Rooms 126, 210, 222, 410 and 512

Premier's Office .....	780.427.2251
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### Committee Rooms A, B and C (4th Floor Legislature Annex)

Committee Services .....	780.427.1831
e-mail .....	committeebookings@assembly.ab.ca

### Interpretive Centre Theatre

Visitor Services .....	780.427.7362
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## Parking, East and South Parkades

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Human Resource Services (LAO) .....	780.427.1364
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## Security

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<b>Sergeant-at-Arms' Office</b> .....	780.422.9259
Brian G. Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms .....	780.427.6048
412 Legislature Building	

### Executive Director, Sheriffs Branch, Solicitor General and Public Security

Vince Caleffi .....	780.422.3500
11th floor, Legislature Annex	

### Manager Legislature Security, Solicitor General and Public Security

Daryl Gourley .....	780.427.7931
Legislature Building	

### Legislature Building Security

Front Desk .....	780.427.7359
e-mail .....	legislature.security@gov.ab.ca

### Chamber Galleries Pass/Security Desk (Sessional)

4th Floor Legislature Building .....	780.422.5504
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### Legislature Annex Security

Front Desk .....	780.422.3662
e-mail .....	security.annex@gov.ab.ca

### After-hours security escort, Annex

Phone .....	780.422.3787
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For more information and a more detailed version of this directory, please consult PeopleFind on the Legislative Assembly Office's intranet site at <http://ourhouse> and the Legislative Assembly of Alberta's website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).



# Remuneration and Benefits

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The following information is based on provisions of the *Legislative Assembly Act* and Members' Services Committee Orders and is meant to aid understanding of those provisions. For authoritative and comprehensive guidance please refer to relevant portions of the Act or Members' Services Committee Orders.

## Remuneration

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### 1. MLA Indemnity and Expense Allowance

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Members receive an annual MLA indemnity plus a tax-free expense allowance equivalent to 50 per cent of the indemnity for expenses incidental to their duties. Current amounts are indicated in section 2, Schedule of Indemnities and Allowance, below. The MLA indemnity and expense allowance is paid monthly and commences on the date the Member is elected and continues through the day preceding the next polling day.

The Human Resource Services branch issues monthly payments, deducting for income tax, Canada pension plan and the various benefit plans that Members select. No deduction is made for employment insurance since Members do not qualify for that benefit.

A Member may miss 10 sitting days in a session without penalty. For each day beyond that, \$100 is deducted from the indemnity and \$50 from the expense allowance. Attendance at a legislative committee meeting counts as attendance at session for that day. No deductions will be made for absences due to illness or injury, bereavement or public or official business. In these cases, the Member advises the Speaker in writing of the reason for the absence.

### 2. Schedule of Indemnities and Allowances

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#### Effective April 1, 2011

In accordance with a decision of the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services on October 5, 1998, components of Member remuneration are to be adjusted on April 1 of each year by the same percentage increase or decrease as in the average weekly earnings for Alberta as reported by Statistics Canada's survey of employment payroll and hours for the immediately preceding calendar year. This schedule is also available for viewing on the website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

However, based on an approved motion of the committee December 8, 2010, there shall be no annual adjustment to the salaries outlined below for the fiscal year April 1, 2011, to March 31, 2012. Salaries have remained unchanged since 2008.

### **MLA Indemnity and Allowance**

MLA indemnity.....	\$52,092
MLA tax -free allowance.....	26,046
Total.....	78,138

### **Additional Indemnity, Office Other than MLA**

Premier .....	\$81,312
Speaker.....	63,912
Minister	
with portfolio.....	63,912
without portfolio.....	28,392
Leader of the Official Opposition.....	63,912
Deputy Speaker/Chair of Committees	31,968
Deputy Chair of Committees .....	15,984
Leader of a recognized opposition.....	28,392

### **Special Members' Allowances**

Official Opposition House Leader .....	\$13,596
Third-party House leader.....	10,872
Chief government whip.....	10,872
Assistant government whip.....	8,136
Chief opposition whip .....	8,136
Assistant opposition whip.....	6,792
Third-party whip.....	6,792

### **RRSP Allowance**

Once in every fiscal year a Member who has served a minimum of three months receives an allowance equal to 50 per cent of the maximum RRSP limit as established by the *Income Tax Act* (Canada).

### **Adjustment of Indemnities, Allowances and Deductions**

The Members' Services Committee has the authority to set indemnities, allowances and deductions.

### 3. Automobiles

The Speaker and Deputy Speaker have the use of an automobile on the same basis as members of the Executive Council.

The Deputy Chair of Committees and leaders of recognized opposition parties as defined in section 42(1) of the *Legislative Assembly Act* have the use of an automobile on the same basis as deputy ministers.

Automobile use includes reimbursement for fuel and other items related to the operation, maintenance and repair of the automobile.

### 4. Committee Allowance

Members may be entitled to additional remuneration for service on committees of the Assembly. For the purposes of remuneration committees are divided into categories A, B and C.

#### Committee Allowances (Categories A and C)

Members receive regular monthly remuneration for their service on categories A and C committees. All Standing Committees and the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services fall into these categories. Members are eligible to be paid for serving on no more than three committees to a maximum of \$3,500 per month.

Chair .....	\$1,500 per month
Deputy Chair .....	1,250 per month
Member .....	1,000 per month

#### Committee Member Allowance (Category B)

For committees in category B members may claim an allowance when meetings are held outside of session. The allowance is based on the length of each meeting and includes travel time to and from the meeting. Committee chairs may claim an additional allowance.

Up to four hours long .....	\$135.90
Over four to eight hours .....	224.20
Longer than eight hours .....	353.00

#### Committee Chair Allowance

(per meeting, in addition to committee member allowance noted above)	
Up to four hours long .....	\$47.70
Over four to eight hours .....	88.50
Longer than eight hours .....	142.70

In lieu of committee allowances the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Leader of any other opposition party represented in the Assembly and the Speaker are each entitled to be paid one monthly allowance of \$3,500.

Members of Executive Council are not eligible to be paid for participation on committees of the Assembly.

Members may also be eligible to claim for meals, travel and living expenses when serving on committees of the Assembly. For information on how to claim for these expenses, see section 15, Committee Expenses.

## **5. Parliamentary Meetings Allowance**

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Members may claim for reasonable travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses while travelling to, attending and returning from functions sponsored by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association or other parliamentary organizations that the Member is authorized by the Members' Services Committee or the Speaker to attend. Claims for these expenses are made through the Financial Management and Administrative Services branch.

## **6. Service on Government Boards, Commissions, Committees and Agencies**

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Unless otherwise ordered by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, Members who

- serve on a board, commission, committee or other body to which they are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, by a minister of the Crown or by regulation, or
- attend a function as representatives of the government of Alberta or of a minister of the Crown

are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable living and travel expenses incurred in the course thereof. Members should submit claims for such expenses directly to the appropriate government body or ministry, not to the Financial Management and Administrative Services branch.

The terms of an appointment to a board, commission, committee or other body as described above may include remuneration for such service. If the Member is eligible for remuneration, the appropriate ministry will co-ordinate payments through the Human Resource Services branch of the Legislative Assembly Office.

## 7. Transition Allowance

Members are entitled to a transition allowance when they leave office. A transition allowance shall be paid to

- a) every Member who resigns their seat as a Member and
- b) every person who was a Member at the time of dissolution and
  - i) does not stand as a candidate for re-election in or
  - ii) is defeated at the election immediately following dissolution.

When a person who is a Member dies, there shall be paid an amount equivalent to the amount of the transition allowance that the deceased person would have been entitled to on the date of death.

- c) For service commencing on or after March 20, 1989, the amount of the transition allowance to be paid shall be determined by the formula  $A \times B \times 3$  where A means
  - iii) the average monthly salary\* based on the three calendar years in which the person received their highest salary or
  - iv) if the Member served less than three calendar years, the average month salary for the person's term of service; and B is the number of years the person served as a Member during the period commencing March 20, 1989.

For service prior to March 20, 1989, the amount of the transition allowance to be paid shall be determined by multiplying the highest rate of the Member's monthly indemnity and expense allowances by one month for every year of service prior to March 20, 1989.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, for the purpose of calculating the amount of a transition allowance, no person shall be credited for any years of service as a Member for which that person has previously received a payment under this section or the predecessor sections.

A person who is eligible to receive a transition allowance may elect to be paid the amount of that allowance over a period of years.

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\* Average monthly salary includes the MLA indemnity and tax-free allowance, RRSP allowance, remuneration for offices other than MLA, special Members' allowance and remuneration for Legislature and government committees.

## Benefits

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### 8. Automatic Deductions

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Premiums for benefits are deducted automatically from the monthly MLA indemnity and expense allowance processed by the Human Resource Services branch. Members forward requests for changes to benefit coverage or existing options to Human Resource Services.

### 9. Members' Choice

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Members' Choice is a combined benefits plan available to all Members. This flexible benefits plan offers Members an opportunity to review and change coverage levels every two years.

#### 9.1 Alberta Health Care

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Coverage under the Alberta health care insurance plan is provided directly through Alberta Health and Wellness.

#### 9.2 Prescription Drugs and Extended Medical Benefits

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Members' Choice provides comprehensive coverage for prescription drugs and extended medical benefits for Members and eligible dependants. The plan provides reimbursement for a portion of the costs for a wide range of services, including

- hospital,
- ambulance,
- emergency dental care,
- prescription drugs (direct bill),
- paramedical practitioners,
- eye exams and vision care,
- chartered psychologists,
- home nursing care, and
- emergency medical services when travelling outside Canada.

The benefit year is July 1 to June 30, and the claims administrator is Alberta Blue Cross.

## **9.3 Dental Benefits**

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Members' Choice dental coverage provides for partial reimbursement of costs of dental services for Members and eligible dependants. Members may select either core or enhanced coverage.

### **Core Coverage**

The core plan provides

- 80 per cent reimbursement for basic dental services,
- 50 per cent reimbursement for major dental services, and
- 50 per cent reimbursement for orthodontic services.

The combined maximum is \$2,000 per insured in a benefit year for basic and major services and a lifetime maximum of \$2,000 per insured for orthodontic services.

The Legislative Assembly pays 100 per cent of the monthly premiums for core coverage.

### **Enhanced Coverage**

The enhanced plan provides

- 100 per cent reimbursement for basic dental services,
- 80 per cent reimbursement for major dental services, and
- 60 per cent reimbursement for orthodontic services.

There is no ceiling on the benefit amount.

Both the Legislative Assembly and the Member contribute to the premium costs for enhanced coverage.

The benefit year for dental coverage is July 1 to June 30, and the claims administrator is Alberta Blue Cross.

## 9.4 Group Life Insurance

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### Accidental Death and Dismemberment

The benefit payable is equal to the Member's amount of core life insurance to a maximum of \$400,000. Coverage is automatic under Members' Choice, and Members pay no premiums.

### Core Life Insurance

Members may select coverage based on either one or three times their total eligible recurring annual salary\* to a maximum of \$400,000. Both the Legislative Assembly and the Member contribute to premium costs.

### Enhanced Life Insurance

Coverage is based on one, two, three or four times the total eligible recurring maximum annual salary of \$150,000\* to a total maximum insured amount of \$600,000 and is subject to evidence of insurability. This is in addition to the core life insurance coverage. Premiums are based on age, gender and smoker status and are paid entirely by the Member.

### Dependant Life Insurance

The coverage is \$15,000 for an eligible benefit recipient and \$7,500 for each dependant child. The Member pays the entire monthly premium. All claims are administered by The Great-West Life Assurance Company.

## 10. Long-term Disability Insurance Plan

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The long-term disability income continuance plan (LTDI) provides partial income for a Member who becomes mentally or physically disabled during their term and, as a result, must resign their seat.

The disability benefit is 70 per cent of the total eligible recurring annual salary.\* There is no minimum service requirement for this benefit. The LTDI benefit continues until such time as the individual is deemed fit to return to gainful employment or reaches age 65.

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\* Total eligible recurring annual salary includes the MLA indemnity and tax-free allowance, RRSP allowance, remuneration for offices other than MLA, special Members' allowances and remuneration for Legislature and government committees.

## **11. Extended Benefits Option**

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The Extended Benefits Option (EBO) provides Members with continued benefit coverage when they resign, choose not to run for re-election or are defeated. Coverage may be extended for benefits listed under the Members' Choice plan.

Coverage for a former Member, if commenced, will continue up to the following, whichever occurs first, and may not thereafter be recommenced:

- the date that the former Member attains the age of 75 (except for life insurance coverage, which terminates at age 70),
- the death of the former Member, or
- the date the former Member gives written notice to discontinue the coverage.

Out-of-Canada emergency travel coverage may be provided to a former Member between the ages of 70 and 75 on the following conditions:

- the former Member must pay any additional monthly premium, and
- the former Member must not be out of the country for more than 30 consecutive days per trip.

Premiums are paid by the former Member and the Legislative Assembly in the same proportions as for current Members for the first five years of coverage or until the former Member reaches the age of 75 years, whichever occurs first.

If a former Member continues coverage beyond the five years, the premiums are to be paid entirely by the former Member.

Former Members can extend only that part of the coverage in place when they ceased to be Members. However, they may discontinue that coverage in whole or in part at any time. Once the extended coverage has been terminated, it may not be recommenced.



# Allowances and Services

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The following information is based on provisions of the *Legislative Assembly Act* and Members' Services Committee Orders and is provided as an aid to understanding those provisions. For authoritative and comprehensive guidance please refer to relevant portions of the Act or Members' Services Orders.

*Please note that the rate for the Members' temporary residence allowance (\$193 per day/\$1,930 per month) is effective April 1, 2009, and the Members' transportation allowance (43.5 cents per kilometre) is effective July 1, 2008. Allowance claim forms are available on OurHouse.*

## Allowances

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### 12. Temporary Residence Allowance

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Members who require temporary residence in or near the city of Edmonton in order to carry out the duties of office may claim temporary residence allowances for accommodation, meals and living expenses according to the following guidelines.

#### Location of Permanent Residence

All Members whose permanent residence is not in the city of Edmonton may claim a temporary residence allowance when in Edmonton to perform public or official duties. Members whose permanent residence is less than 60 kilometres by primary highway from the Legislature Building may claim a temporary residence allowance only if they work 12 or more hours on the day for which they are claiming the allowance, including travel time. For a complete definition of permanent residence please see the Members' Allowances Order section in the Consolidated Members' Services Committee Orders. Members may claim only one allowance for living expenses for any one day.

#### Sessional Allowance

Members who qualify for a temporary residence allowance (see the Members' Allowances Order) may claim \$193 for each day of sitting during which they maintain a temporary residence in or near Edmonton. This allowance may not be claimed for a Friday, Saturday or Sunday unless the Member is in or near Edmonton on public or official business that requires an overnight stay on those days.

## **Outside Session or Sessional Adjournment of More than Eight Days**

Members may claim one of the following allowances:

- nonsessional allowance of \$193 for each day, not exceeding 10 days in a part month or 30 days in any three consecutive calendar months (beginning on the first day of the next month and ending on the last day of the third month), that they are in or near Edmonton on public or official business and have maintained a temporary Edmonton residence; or
- a nonsessional allowance for capital residence of \$1,930 per calendar month or, in the case of a part month, \$193 per day in the part month to a maximum of \$1,930 when they own or lease a temporary residence in their names.

Months and part months are calculated beginning on the day after the adjournment of a sitting. Members may claim either of these allowances by submitting a Member's claim form to Financial Management and Administrative Services. While these claims may be submitted at any time, Members are encouraged to submit them at intervals, preferably monthly, to ensure prompt processing. Claims should also be submitted at the end of a legislative sitting, with the capital residence allowance section initialled to authorize the resumption of payment of that allowance. In the case of the capital residence allowance, the Member submits a copy of the lease or deed to Financial Management and Administrative Services, and they process a regular monthly payment. All capital residence leases/deeds are reviewed yearly, but Members are asked to notify the branch immediately of any change of residence.

Members may not claim the sessional allowance for any day for which deductions are made for nonattendance (see section 1, MLA Indemnity and Expense Allowance).

## **13. Extraordinary Temporary Residence Allowance**

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Any Member may claim an allowance of \$193 per day for up to 10 days in a fiscal year when it is reasonably necessary for the Member to pay for overnight accommodation anywhere within the province for the purpose of carrying out the duties of a Member. The Member must fill out a Member's temporary residence allowance claim form with the dates and municipality(ies) travelled to and submit it to Financial Management and Administrative Services for processing.

## **14. Travel Allowances**

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The Legislative Assembly reimburses the following travel expenses incurred by Members if they are related to and reasonably necessary for the performance of their duties as Members.

### **14.1 Air Travel**

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Members are entitled to unlimited regularly scheduled air travel between their constituencies or normal places of residence and Edmonton. In addition, Members on official MLA business may use regularly scheduled air service between points anywhere in Alberta. The Assembly pays for a maximum of five such return trips per Member in a fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). A Member who is the leader of an opposition party is entitled to unlimited regularly scheduled air travel within Alberta.

Members representing the constituencies listed in the Transportation Order may be entitled to chartered air service within or close to their constituency's boundaries provided that the trip cannot be made with reasonable convenience using regularly scheduled air service. For information on eligibility such Members may contact the Clerk of the Assembly or Financial Management and Administrative Services.

#### **Airline Bonus Points**

Frequent flyer points earned on Legislative Assembly business may be used by the Member either for business or for personal use. Points redeemed for personal use are considered a taxable benefit. It is the Member's responsibility to report the fair market value of the taxable benefit in their annual tax return. Fair market value for an airline ticket is described as the cost for the same flight in the same travel class with the same restrictions. Members should contact Human Resource Services for further information on the taxable benefit of personal use of points earned on Assembly business.

### **14.2 Surface Travel in Lieu of Air Travel**

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Members choosing not to travel by air on any or all of the five allotted return trips in the fiscal year may claim a per-kilometre allowance as set out in the *Public Service Subsistence, Travel and Moving Expenses Regulation* less 7 cents per kilometre, to a maximum of 1,500 kilometres per trip, for surface travel by private automobile.

## **14.3 Automobile Travel**

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Members may claim expenses for operating private automobiles, including fuel, oil, lubrication fluid, antifreeze, gas-line antifreeze, transmission fluid, brake fluid, steering fluid, windshield washer fluid and car washing and waxing, including labour. Members may have two reasonably priced detailing services done during each fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). Contact Financial Management and Administrative Services for details on allowable amounts per detailing. Please note that any other vehicle maintenance not covered under Members' Services orders—for example, tune-ups, tire repair or replacement, engine repair, et cetera—will not be reimbursed.

In addition, Members may claim a per-kilometre allowance at the rate set out in the *Public Service Subsistence, Travel and Moving Expenses Regulation* less 7 cents per kilometre travelled by private automobile for general travel within the province. In each fiscal year Members representing rural constituencies may claim up to 18,000 kilometres without fuel receipts and up to 62,000 additional kilometres with receipts; that is, there is an 80,000-kilometre limit. Members representing urban constituencies may claim up to 10,000 kilometres in a fiscal year without fuel receipts and 25,000 additional kilometres with receipts. The limit in this case is 35,000 kilometres. Members are required to retain all original, detailed fuel receipts for subsequent attachment to either MLA vehicle fuel credit card statements or personal expense claims. Members may claim these allowances by completing a Member's automobile allowance claim form and submitting it monthly to Financial Management and Administrative Services.

An allowance as set out at the same per-kilometre rate covers up to 52 return trips per fiscal year between Edmonton and a Member's residence, place of employment, business or constituency. This allowance is in addition to that listed in the preceding paragraph. Members may claim it by completing a Member's automobile allowance claim form and submitting it to Financial Management and Administrative Services on a monthly basis. Members are encouraged to keep a travel log to support automobile allowance claims in the event of an audit.

## **14.4 Parking**

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Members are reimbursed for airport parking expenses. In addition, they may incur other parking expenses of up to \$900 in a fiscal year when attending meetings or other events in the course of their duties as Members. They may claim these expenses by submitting a personal expense claim form to Financial Management and Administrative Services or charge the expense to their LAO-

provided travel credit card. If a parking charge exceeds the allowable rate set in the government of Alberta's *Public Service Subsistence, Travel and Moving Expenses Regulation*, a receipt must be supplied. Members may wish to have the Legislative Assembly Office enter into a contract with a specific airport or parking authority whereby the monthly airport parking fee is paid directly by the Legislative Assembly. The appropriate forms should be forwarded to Financial Management and Administration Services, reviewed by Legal Services and approved by the Clerk of the Assembly.

## **14.5 Taxi Fares and Automobile Rentals**

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Members are reimbursed for taxi travel incurred anywhere in Alberta. A Member may choose to rent a vehicle within Edmonton, Calgary or surrounding areas or, additionally, anywhere in Alberta to a maximum of five days in a fiscal year. Members may submit a personal expense claim form to Financial Management and Administrative Services or charge the expense to their LAO-provided travel credit card.

## **14.6 Bus Travel**

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Members are entitled to regularly scheduled long-distance bus transportation within the province. Expenses may be claimed by way of a personal expense claim with receipts or charged to their LAO-provided travel credit card.

## **14.7 Spouse/Family Member/Guest Travel**

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When the spouse, family member or guest of a Member accompanies or joins that Member in Edmonton and when the trip is related to the Member's public or official business in any other part of Alberta, reasonable living and travelling expenses may be paid to them or on their behalf. A maximum of four round trips may be claimed in a fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).

For guidelines pertaining to travel by Members' constituency or legislative staff, see section 16, Members' Services Allowance.

## **14.8 Spouse/Guest Interparliamentary Travel**

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Spouses, family members or guests accompanying Members on the following may be reimbursed for travelling and living expenses when appropriate approvals are secured:

- a conference, meeting, seminar or other function sponsored by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association or any of its regions or branches;

- a meeting of any other parliamentary association or any of its divisions; or
- any meeting or function attended by the Member as a representative of the Legislative Assembly or the Speaker.

Special travel accident insurance coverage is provided for a guest, spouse or family member when that person is invited by a Member to travel for an event under the corresponding Members' Services Order. Payment of these limited benefits would depend on the specific facts of any claim.

Members should contact Financial Management and Administrative Services for a referral before making a claim with the risk management and insurance (RMI) branch of Alberta Finance and Enterprise.

## **15. Committee Expenses**

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Members may claim expenses related to service on committees appointed by the Legislative Assembly. Expenses for meals and transportation may be claimed when committee members are travelling or engaged in committee business. If accommodations are not required, meals may be claimed as the allowance for living expenses is not claimed. Members may claim a per-kilometre allowance at the rate set out in the *Public Service Subsistence, Travel and Moving Expenses Regulation* less 7 cents per kilometre for travel by private vehicle or reasonable expenses for travel by other means.

Committee members may claim an allowance of \$193 per day for living expenses when they are engaged in committee business provided they are required to obtain accommodation because they are away from their normal place of residence. Committee members may not claim the \$193 allowance for living expenses if they have already claimed a temporary residence allowance for that day. Also, when committee meetings are held in Edmonton, committee members receiving the capital residence allowance for that month are not eligible to claim the allowance for living expenses.

For committee business outside of Edmonton the Committee Clerk usually arranges and pays for committee members' travel, accommodation and meals.

Members may claim the committee allowances specified above by completing a Members' expense claim for Legislature committee service. Claim forms are available from Committee Clerks. To ensure prompt payment, committee members are encouraged to complete and return claim forms to the Committee Clerk by the end of a meeting or as soon as possible thereafter.

## 16. Members' Services Allowance

Each Member is entitled to a Members' Services allowance to provide services to constituents. Members are personally responsible for their allowance. Only Members can authorize expenditures against the allowance.

The amount of the Members' Services allowance is calculated as follows, where E is the number of electors in the most recent list of electors for that constituency and C is the population in the Member's electoral division according to the Alberta population estimates as reported annually by Alberta Finance and Enterprise.

- (a) (i) \$26,552 for office operations
- (ii) \$77,589 for staffing

(b) +  $\$1.22 \times (E \div 1.5)$

(c) +  $\$2,865 + \$0.0757 \times (C - 14,000)$

- (d) + an adjustment amount based on the table below and matrix scores.

MATRIX SCORE	ADJUSTMENT
-18 to 0	\$0
1 to 4	\$5,930
5 to 9	\$11,861
10 to 15	\$17,790
16 +	\$23,721

The Members' Services allowance is allocated to each Member every fiscal year. The Member determines how much is spent on the constituency office, communications or promotional expenses. The Member may use the allowance for residential security systems or for reimbursement of living expenses in connection with travel within the Member's electoral division (guidelines follow). Note that this allowance cannot be used for charitable donations.

Members may obtain the calculation of their entitlement to this allowance from Financial Management and Administrative Services. See *Constituency Services Order* RMSC 1992, c. C-1 of the Consolidated Members' Services Committee Orders for the official orders on which the information in this Members' Guide is based.

Members may transfer up to 25 per cent of their allowance to the caucus office for administration or research. To authorize such a transfer, Members send a signed memorandum to the Clerk of the Assembly.

Financial Management and Administrative Services provides each Member with a month-end statement listing opening balance, debits, credits and closing balance for the Members' Services allowance. *Please note that all contracts for office space, staff, supplies and services must be signed by the Clerk of the Assembly.*

Refer to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta Expenditure Guidelines for Members of the Legislative Assembly for additional guidance on compliant and noncompliant expenses from the Member's Service allowance.

### **Constituency Office Expenses**

The allowance may be used to pay for office space, office furnishings, office assistance and related services. It may also be used to pay the reasonable living and travel expenses of staff working for the Member and travelling to the Legislature or to the Member's constituency or for the reasonable living and travelling expenses of constituency office staff who travel within their Member's electoral division on constituency-related business. For employee per diem or kilometre rates or guidelines on allowable travel expenses please contact Financial Management and Administrative Services. The constituency office may not be used for promoting partisan political activities, nor may constituency office staff engage in such activities during normal working hours.

### **Communication Expenses**

This allowance may be used to pay expenses related to nonpartisan communication between Members and their constituents, including but not limited to

- printing and postage for mass mailings of letters, pamphlets, brochures, Christmas cards and other greetings to constituents,
- postage for mailings to constituents,
- advertisements,
- purchase of mobile devices (e.g. personal digital assistants), and
- reasonable expenses for registration, materials and tuition fees related to learning another language.

Members may contact Financial Management and Administrative Services for assistance with contacting Canada Post or Service Alberta to ensure preferred rates are obtained and delivery/address assistance is received.

Members may use this allowance to pay for the development, design and hosting of a constituency website to facilitate communication with constituents. They may also pay for the registration of a domain name for their website from the allowance. The registration period should not exceed one year. Rules regarding nonpartisan communication and use of the allowance apply. For additional guidance refer to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta Website Guidelines for Members of the Legislative Assembly, Constituency Offices and Caucus Offices on OurHouse.

This allowance may be used to pay for copy charges incurred through use of the multifunction device in the constituency office when cumulative copy charges exceed the \$900 per fiscal year maximum. See also section 22, Furniture, Electronic Equipment and Supplies.

Separate from the Members' Services allowance, Members are allotted a maximum of \$750 per Member per fiscal year for postage for individually addressed constituency mailings from the Legislature Building or Legislature Annex. Members are provided with a monthly report indicating the balance of their \$750 postage allowance. All other postage is charged to the Members' Services allowance. Postage request forms are available from Financial Management and Administrative Services or on OurHouse. If Members have any questions regarding constituency postage, they should contact Financial Management and Administrative Services.

### **Promotional Expenses**

Members may purchase pins, flags and other promotional items to give to constituents and others in the course of their duties. Gifts or promotional items cannot exceed \$400 per item, may not be alcohol, currency or cash in kind where its use is unrestricted and may not be given to another Member or under personal or partisan circumstances. The Legislative Assembly Gift Shop provides a variety of promotional items which Members may order. Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services compiles an annual catalogue of Gift Shop items and distributes it to Members' constituency and Legislature offices. Gift Shop orders cannot be processed without an MLA purchase order. Contact Visitor Services for more information about MLA Gift Shop purchasing. Members may also order promotional items directly from private suppliers.

For photographs and graphics of the Mace, Coat of Arms and Legislature Building contact Communications Services.

## Residential Security Systems

Members may use the allowance for reimbursement of expenses incurred for the installation or monitoring of a security system in their permanent residence, temporary residence in or near Edmonton or both. See section 12 of this Guide for details on permanent and temporary residence definitions.

Members have the flexibility to negotiate with vendors and select the type of alarm system and options required to meet the Member's particular situation and the responsibility to enter into a contractual arrangement and pay the service provider based on the terms of the agreement. This includes contacting vendors, arranging an onsite assessment, determining equipment options and specifics of the installation, negotiating with the service provider, complying with any applicable municipal bylaws and obtaining the necessary permits related to installation and monitoring.

Upon submission of an expense claim by the Member to the LAO with the appropriate supporting documentation and detailed, original receipts, the residential alarm costs will be reimbursed from the Members' Services allowance, subject to a maximum annual cost of \$1,500 per security system installed in either the permanent or temporary residence or both. You may access the personal expense claim form from the forms section of OurHouse.

Residential alarm costs include costs associated with the procurement, installation, service, repair, ongoing monitoring, false alarms, permits, fees and early termination charges.

The LAO (Sergeant-at-Arms) will provide advice to Members, as requested, with respect to the features and options of an alarm system that a Member may wish to consider in addressing their specific needs or requirements.

The LAO (Financial Management and Administrative Services) will provide a list of vendors, should the Member wish to use them, capable of providing quality products and services on a province-wide basis.

Members who cease to be Members of the Legislative Assembly may continue to pay for the services personally or discontinue the service. Upon ceasing to be a Member, the costs will no longer be reimbursable from the MSA.

If a taxable benefit were to accrue to a Member, as determined by Canada Revenue Agency, it is the responsibility of the individual Member to determine and record this benefit on their annual personal tax returns.

The LAO makes no representations, guarantees or warranties with respect to any of the services, equipment or protection of the residential alarm system.

## **Living Expenses for Members Travelling within their Constituencies**

The allowance may be used to reimburse the Member for living expenses in connection with travel within the Member's electoral division that requires an overnight stay at a location 60 kilometres or more from the Member's permanent residence.

## **17. Constituency Office Space**

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Members are responsible for locating their own constituency office space. The space does not have to be in the Member's constituency, and two or more Members may share an office and the cost of the lease.

When Members have found suitable space and made an informal arrangement with the lessor, they advise Financial Management and Administrative Services. Members are urged to consult Legal Services when negotiating lease agreements. When details of the lease agreement have been established, Financial Management and Administrative Services will prepare a lease in the standard form for approval by the Member and signature by the landlord. When the lease has been signed by the lessor and the Member, the document should be returned to Financial Management and Administrative Services for final review by Legal Services and the Clerk's signature. Financial Management and Administrative Services automatically pays office rents monthly and in advance.

Members should note that all leases are made between the lessor and the Legislative Assembly Office. All official notices from the lessor should be forwarded to the Clerk. As well, any official notices or correspondence, lease amendments or terminations must be initiated by the Legislative Assembly Office and signed by the Clerk.

Members are encouraged to resolve any day-to-day operational difficulties with their lessor's property managers directly and informally. However, if there are any ongoing, urgent contractual or financial problems regarding the lease, the office space or services provided by the lessor, Members should contact Financial Management and Administrative Services as soon as possible for assistance.

New Members are encouraged to take over outstanding leases if at all feasible; however, they may make every effort to secure the accommodation best suited to their needs in serving constituents.

Members must arrange for any signage in addition to that supplied by Financial Management and Administrative Services. Expenses for additional signage will be charged against the Members' Services allowance.

The content of constituency office signage is limited to the Member's name, electoral division, the term "constituency office," Alberta's Coat of Arms and pertinent operational details. Members are advised to contact Financial Management and Administrative Services to ensure that any planned constituency office signage falls within these guidelines.

## **18. Constituency Office Staff**

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The Members' Services allowance (MSA) provides funds for administrative/office support and related services in the constituency office.

The Member is responsible for selecting and hiring staff with the skills and knowledge required to operate the constituency office under the direction of the Member and for determining the working level and commencement salary pursuant to the Constituency Compensation Plan.

For assistance with the recruitment and selection process please contact Human Resource Services. A step-by-step constituency recruitment guide is also available.

Constituency employees are paid according to the Constituency Compensation Plan, which was approved by the Members' Services Committee and implemented on April 1, 2006. The plan is designed to provide an equitable level of pay and benefits to constituency employees across Alberta.

Under this plan the Member determines the working level of each employee based on operational needs of the constituency office. The rate of pay for each employee is determined by the Member in comparison to the compensation pay grids established for the three working levels.

Constituency employees are hired on employment contracts with the Legislative Assembly Office. On the recommendation of the Member a contract is entered into by both the Member and employee, forwarded to Human Resource Services and then authorized by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly or designate.

## **19. Purchasing**

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Members order all items to be paid for from the Members' Services allowance on a purchase order form, which can be obtained from Financial Management and Administrative Services. Items ordered through Financial Management and Administrative Services that are not provided from the MLA administration budget are automatically charged to the Member's allowance. Members must provide Financial Management and Administrative Services

with invoices for items from private suppliers, proof of receipt of goods or services and a copy of the appropriate purchase order so that the supplier can be paid promptly.

Members are urged to use an MLA purchase order to initiate purchases as it contains the GST/HST disclaimer required by vendors for remittance to the Canada Revenue Agency. Where purchase orders are not accepted, as in cases of prepayment, Members can use a copy of the Legislative Assembly's GST/HST disclaimer obtained from the forms section of OurHouse or Financial Management and Administrative Services.

To claim out-of-pocket purchases against the Members' Services allowance, Members present original, detailed receipts and complete a personal expense claim form obtained from the forms section of OurHouse or Financial Management and Administrative Services. Personal expense claims for staff must be approved by the Member.

### **Ownership of Equipment**

All equipment and furnishings purchased through the Members' Services allowance remain the property of the Legislative Assembly Office.

## **20. Credit Cards**

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Members are provided with a credit card for Assembly-related MLA travel, a gasoline credit card and a calling card for long-distance calls if requested. These are the only credit and toll cards authorized for use. For audit purposes Members must forward their original, detailed vendor receipts for credit card transactions to Financial Management and Administrative Services with monthly statements, which will be sent to Members for signature and must be returned to Financial Management and Administrative Services for payment processing. If any credit card is lost or stolen, the Member should immediately notify the credit card company and Financial Management and Administrative Services.

## **21. Telecommunications Services**

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### **Constituency Office**

Financial Management and Administrative Services arranges and pays for the installation, rental and tolls for three telephone sets and three incoming lines for one constituency office per constituency. The three incoming lines include a main voice line, a rotary voice line and a third line to be used at the discretion of

the constituency office. Each office is provided with voice mail, call display and a single telephone line for use in support of facsimile service.

The branch will also arrange for installation and pay rental and tolls for one single-line service to additional offices in a constituency. Members should note that the cost of fax and other telephone lines for additional offices may be chargeable to their Members' Services allowance.

### **Primary Residence**

Financial Management and Administrative Services arranges and pays for the installation, rental and tolls for one single-line service in a Member's primary residence provided the line is a second service to the location.

### **Temporary Residence**

For Members whose constituencies are outside the city of Edmonton and who are eligible to maintain a temporary residence in Edmonton under the Members' allowances order, Financial Management and Administrative Services arranges and pays for the installation, rental and tolls for one single-line service per temporary residence.

### **Ancillary Charges**

If Members require extra telephone features or equipment for both conventional and cellular services beyond the standard issue, they may pay for them from their Members' Services allowance. Please contact Financial Management and Administrative Services for details and help in obtaining these services for conventional telephone services and Information Technology Services for cellular services.

## **22. Furniture and Supplies**

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### **Furniture**

Each Member is provided with a standard constituency office furniture package for their main constituency office sufficient to accommodate the Member and staff. The package includes a medium-weight shredder. A limited, more basic package will be provided if a Member chooses to open a satellite constituency office.

### **Supplies**

The Legislative Assembly Office will supply \$1,250 worth of stationery per constituency office per fiscal year. Stationery costs exceeding that amount will be charged to the Members' Services allowance. Financial Management

and Administrative Services facilitates an online ordering protocol to allow easy and quick access to supplies. When Members purchase any supplies from private vendors, the cost is charged to their Members' Services allowance. This applies even to supplies similar to those available from Financial Management and Administrative Services.

Financial Management and Administrative Services also provides standard format business cards and letterhead, which may be personalized by overprinting a Member's name and other information. These may be ordered through the online ordering application maintained by Financial Management and Administrative Services. Members are encouraged to contact Financial Management and Administrative Services before ordering business cards or letterhead with special or extra features since additional costs may be incurred and the issuance of an appropriate purchase order may be required.

## **22.1 Constituency Office Security Alarm Systems**

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The Sergeant-at-Arms co-ordinates the installation and support of an alarm system in each constituency office, including satellite offices, at the expense of the LAO. When occupying an office or moving furniture within a constituency office, please contact the Sergeant-at-Arms' office.

## **23. IT Equipment, Network Support and IT Services**

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Information Technology Services (ITS) provides IT equipment, training and ongoing technical support to all Members and constituency offices. Equipment and services may include

- Desktop/laptop computers with suite of applications;
- Networked printers, including a multifunction device in the constituency office (printer/copier/scanner/fax);
- Network functionality and co-ordinated internet access/services. ITS will co-ordinate the installation, billing and basic charges for Internet as required in a Member's primary and temporary residences. They will also co-ordinate all installations and billed service in the constituency offices.

Satellite constituency offices can be set up with a basic IT package based on the standard equipment lease agreement that is charged to an MLA's Member's Services allowance (MSA).

In addition, Members may purchase mobile devices (PDA, mobile stick, tablet, etc.) and pay for the equipment from their MSAs. The Legislative Assembly Office will cover charges related to voice (airtime and long distance) incurred

by the Member; data charges will be applied against their MSA. Members must contact ITS prior to initiation, transfer or termination of any mobile services. All contractual agreements must be signed by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

## **24. Insurance**

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The Legislative Assembly Office co-ordinates insurance coverage for general liability for Members when they are conducting their official duties and responsibilities and for property of the Legislative Assembly. Coverage is maintained and claims are processed by the risk management and insurance (RMI) branch of Alberta Finance and Enterprise on behalf of the LAO, based on applicable legislation and regulations. It is very important to have all contracts reviewed by Legal Services and signed by the Clerk to ensure that appropriate wording regarding insurance and liability is included in the agreement and the Assembly's insurance requirements are met. Note that this information on insurance is general. Contact Financial Management and Administrative Services to discuss specific details.

### **24.1 General Liability Coverage**

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While acting within the scope of their duties as Members, current and former Members are covered for civil liability claims by the Risk Management and Insurance fund. Criminal or intentionally harmful acts are not covered. The coverage applies to all sums resulting from liability imposed on Members by law or for which they are legally responsible, for loss or damage caused by an occurrence because of bodily and/or personal injury or for property damage as referenced in section 24.4.

Members are protected from liability in certain circumstances on the basis of parliamentary privilege. For example, parliamentary privilege offers Members immunity from civil suits for statements they make in the Assembly or in a committee of the Assembly. Should Members be served or threatened with legal action in what they perceive as a matter of parliamentary privilege, they should contact Legal Services immediately.

#### **Members' Liability Insurance Claim Process**

Members who become aware that they may be subject to legal action are requested to follow the steps below in order to assist them in determining whether they should approach Risk Management and Insurance (RMI) for coverage.

- The affected Member will notify the Speaker in writing.
- Written notification will provide as much detail as possible related to the claim.
- Upon receipt of such written notification the Speaker will meet with the Member and consult with appropriate resources, including officers of the Legislature, regarding the claim.
- After reviewing the advice obtained by the Speaker during this consultative process, the Member will determine if a request for coverage should be forwarded to the risk management and insurance (RMI) branch of Alberta Finance and Enterprise.
- RMI will evaluate the claim and determine whether coverage is applicable.
- If coverage is applicable, RMI will manage the claim from that point on.

Activities away from the Assembly or constituency office may be covered if they are within the scope of a Member's duties. Events of this nature can be reviewed to ensure coverage exists and proof of insurance is provided. A Member is not covered, however, for personal injury or liability if he or she is acting on behalf of another entity such as his or her political party or riding association. Contact Financial Management and Administrative Services to discuss specific details.

For more information on the general liability process or coverage, please contact Legal Services.

## **24.2 Property Insurance Coverage**

The contents of the constituency office or Legislature office that are owned or financed by the Assembly or that the Assembly has agreed in writing to insure are covered for physical loss, damage, theft or burglary.

Members and staff are reminded that personal property is excluded. If there is a special circumstance, Members should contact Financial Management and Administrative Services for details.

## **24.3 Automobile Insurance Coverage**

Private vehicles or privately leased or rented vehicles are covered only by an individual's personal automobile liability policy. If a Member rents a vehicle and anticipates using it for nonbusiness purposes (i.e., not related to their duties as a Member), it is strongly suggested that the loss damage waiver or collision damage waiver offered by the rental company be purchased. In these cases the vehicle should be rented in the name of the Member who will be

required to provide proof of a liability insurance policy. If a vehicle is being rented and will be definitely used only in the course of the Member's duties as a Member, the vehicle can be rented in the name of the Legislative Assembly Office, and the loss damage waiver and the collision damage waiver are not necessary. Losses arising from the Member's use of the rental vehicle are to be reported to the LAO.

For information on coverage or claims procedures Members should contact Financial Management and Administrative Services or consult the Insurance Program Summary for Members of the Legislative Assembly brochure.

## **24.4 Bodily Injury and Property Damage Coverage**

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Coverage is provided by RMI to the Legislative Assembly Office and MLAs for damages arising out of third-party bodily injury, personal injury or property damage provided there is a legal responsibility to pay and such damages are not intentional.

Activities that take place away from the Legislative Assembly or constituency office such as town hall meetings, seasonal open house events, constituency pancake breakfasts or barbecues may be covered if they are within the scope of a Member's duties. Events of this nature can be reviewed to ensure coverage exists, and proof of insurance can be provided when required. Contact Financial Management and Administrative Services to discuss specific details or to request an RMI assessment.

## **Services**

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### **25. Scrolls**

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Members may obtain congratulatory scrolls for significant birthdays and anniversaries, usually in five-year increments, by completing the scroll request form on the Assembly website or OurHouse.

The Legislative Assembly Office provides scrolls for significant birthdays and anniversaries at no charge to the Member, but other scroll requests are charged to the Members' Services allowance at a rate of \$5 per scroll. Members may obtain detailed information on scrolls from the websites or by contacting 780.427.1302.

## **26. Publications**

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For details on obtaining copies of Bills, *Alberta Hansard* and other sessional publications, see sections 69 through 78, Documents of the Assembly. For details on the availability of the *Statutes of Alberta* see section 75, Statutes. The Legislative Assembly Office also distributes a range of educational, informational and commemorative publications, including English and French editions of the *Citizen's Guide to the Alberta Legislature* as well as a variety of promotional brochures about programs and services.

## **27. Caucus Services**

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Offices are provided to Members in the Legislature Building and Legislature Annex and are grouped according to party caucus. Each caucus traditionally has its own budget and allocates funds for administrative, research, secretarial and other support to the Members of that caucus. For guidelines on compliant and noncompliant caucus expenditures consult the *Legislative Assembly of Alberta Expenditure Guidelines for Caucus*, which is available on OurHouse.

## **28. Information and Records Management and FOIP Services**

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The Information and Records Management unit of Financial Management and Administrative Services is available to all Members and their staff to provide advice on the effective organization, storage, protection and disposition of Members' records. They act as a liaison with the Alberta Records Centre, Service Alberta, to co-ordinate the secure destruction of Members' records upon request. Also, the unit is available to consult should Members' records be damaged or destroyed.

The Director of Financial Management and Administrative Services acts as a FOIP co-ordinator for the Legislative Assembly Office. Any requests from the public for records or information, advice on privacy concerns or other issues related to the application of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or requests for advice on best practices in this area can be addressed by the Director.

## Other Facilities and Services

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### 29. Property Management

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Alberta Infrastructure, through the facilities manager, co-ordinates all regular building services in both the Legislature Building and the Legislature Annex, including cleaning, plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling, carpentry and care of plants provided to office areas. Members may direct all related inquiries and requests to the facilities manager at 780.427.7183. Members needing telephone repairs, modifications or relocations are asked to contact Financial Management and Administrative Services. Members should be aware that telephone service to the Legislature Building and Legislature Annex is provided by Bell Canada.

### 30. Health and Safety

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The Legislative Assembly Office is committed to the health, safety and well-being of Members and employees. The LAO provides necessary resources, information and training to enable Members to recognize health and safety concerns, minimize the occurrence of work-related incidents and promote health and well-being.

As a component of this program evacuation guidelines are in place for constituency offices and the Legislature precincts. Contact Human Resource Services for information or visit OurHouse.

### 31. Media Room

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There is a media interview room on the first floor, south wing of the Legislature Building. It is available to Members and has a capacity of 30. Members may book the room through the Legislature Building facilities manager on a first-come, first-served basis.

### 32. Meeting Rooms

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Members may book any of several meeting rooms at the Legislature. Locations and availability follow.

## **32.1 Legislature Building Meeting Rooms**

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**Carillon Room, Rooms 126, 210, 410, and 512**

Available year-round. To book, please call 780.427.2251. Individual Members' reservations of the Carillon Room may be cancelled if they conflict with government requirements.

### **Seating**

The Carillon Room seats approximately 20 at a large table, with additional seating available along the walls. Room 512 seats 45 while rooms 410, 126 and 210 are available for smaller groups.

## **32.2 Legislature Annex Meeting Rooms**

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Committee rooms A, B and C are on the fourth floor of the Legislature Annex. The three rooms are available year-round. Room A seats 25, and Room B seats 23. Both rooms have additional seating for the media and the public. Room C provides casual seating for 65-70.

For questions or to book, please call the committees office at 780.427.1831 or e-mail [committeebookings@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:committeebookings@assembly.ab.ca).

## **33. Pedway**

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A 50-seat theatre is located in the Interpretive Centre. It has a stage area, video projector and screen. To book, call 780.427.7362.

Contact numbers for all meeting room bookings are listed in the directory included in this guide.

## **34. Parking**

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Members are provided with a parking stall in one of the parkades at the Legislature. Please contact Human Resource Services at 780.427.1364 for assistance.

Please note that parking restrictions on the Legislature Grounds are strictly enforced.

## **35. Security**

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Security in the Assembly Chamber and its precincts, including the Speaker's, public, Members' and press galleries, is provided by Legislative Assembly Security Staff (LASS) under the direction of the Sergeant-at-Arms. The Sergeant-at-Arms also provides security advice, including about residential alarm systems, to Members and constituency office staff and co-ordinates the installation of constituency office alarm systems. Any matters related to security in the Chamber may be referred to the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms at 780.422.9259.

During session Members' staff who wish to access the Confederation Room and Opposition Lounge require a precinct pass card issued by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Security services in the Legislature Building, Annex and surrounding grounds are provided by the Department of Solicitor General and Public Security, sheriff protection services branch (DSGPS), who report to the Solicitor General. DSGPS staff are stationed at the main entrances of the Legislature and Annex buildings.

Security in the parkades and pedway as well as traffic and parking control are also the responsibility of DSGPS staff. The patrol is headquartered in the pedway next to the Interpretive Centre. Security matters related to these areas may be referred to the Manager, Legislature Building and Legislature Annex Security, at 780.427.7359.

### **35.1 Security Access Cards**

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The Legislative Assembly Office issues security access cards to all Members and staff of the Legislative Assembly. Executive Council and their staff may contact government centre security for cards. Lost cards should be reported immediately to government centre security at 780.422.2157 and to the Sergeant-at-Arms at 780.422.9259.

Members and staff working after normal hours in the Legislature Building and Annex may arrange to be accompanied to their cars by security staff. Persons whose offices are in the Legislature Building may ask one of the sheriffs at the main entrance to accompany them while those in the Legislature Annex may call 780.422.3787, and a sheriff will be sent to the office. Members and staff are advised to take normal precautions such as locking their cars and storing valuables out of sight. When working after hours, Members and staff should also ensure that office areas and individual offices are secure even if they must be away from their desks for a short time.

## **35.2 Members' Identification Card**

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The Legislative Assembly Office, through the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms issues to each Member a Members' Identification Card (MIC). The MIC can be used to establish occupational documentation when travelling or in other circumstances where photographic identification or proof of occupation is required. It features the Member's name, photograph and signature on the front. It is countersigned by the Speaker on the reverse. The MIC is valid until a Member ceases to be a Member or on the dissolution of the Assembly. The loss or theft of an MIC should be reported to the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

## **36. Services for Visitors**

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The LAO, through the office of Visitor Services, will arrange tours and reserve seats in the galleries for guests. Members can request that time be set aside for them to speak or take photographs with their groups. All group tours or gallery visits require advance booking and may be booked through Visitor Services at 780.427.7362.

Members may wish to participate in school programming such as the weeklong *School at the Legislature* for Grade 6 and *Mr. Speaker's MLA for a Day* for high school students. The Legislative Assembly Office pays for travel for these programs from any constituency in the province.

## **37. Retail Services**

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The Legislative Assembly Gift Shop provides a retail service to all constituencies and departments at preferred pricing. A Members' catalogue is distributed annually, and sample items can be viewed on the website. Where feasible the shop also handles special order requests for Members.

## **38. Reference and Information Services**

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The Legislature Library provides customized information services to Members in their various roles as legislators, political debaters, public orators and constituency representatives. Library staff can assist in locating and retrieving research and facts in a timely, confidential and nonpartisan manner. Library cards are available which enable easy access to full text documents online, lending services for books and periodicals and reference services on any topic. The Alberta Library (TAL) cards are also issued to enable borrowing privileges from over 200 libraries throughout the province. Contact the Legislature Library at 780.427.2473 or email [library.requests@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:library.requests@assembly.ab.ca).



# The Legislative Assembly Office

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## Introduction

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The Legislative Assembly Office is organized according to the chart at the beginning of this guide. The responsibilities of the presiding officers, the Clerk and senior managers are described in the following paragraphs.

### 39. Introduction

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The origins of the Legislative Assembly Office can be traced to 14th century England, when Parliament elected the first Speaker and appointed the first Clerk. Because the Speaker has administrative authority over the office, it is sometimes called the Speaker's department; however, it is not a government department. Its current title was made official when the *Legislative Assembly Act* was passed in 1983.

Within the traditions of parliamentary democracy as constitutionally established in Alberta the Legislative Assembly Office will

- support the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in carrying out the duties of office;
- support Members in carrying out their roles as elected representatives of the people of Alberta;
- record the proceedings and maintain and preserve the records of the Legislative Assembly;
- inform and educate the public on behalf of Members and the institution of Parliament;
- provide a positive, productive, healthy and secure environment for Members and staff of the Assembly;
- enable Members and staff to perform their duties in adherence with legislation, policies and professional practices applying to the Legislative Assembly Office;
- support the Assembly in protecting its institutions and privileges;
- support the exchange of information and ideas among Parliaments;
- build partnerships with external clients in support of the institution of Parliament.

## Presiding Officers

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### 40. Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

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The Speaker is the presiding officer of the Legislative Assembly and is responsible for its organization as a legislative body and an administrative unit. The Speaker ranks in precedence directly after the Premier and for administrative purposes has the same rank as a minister. Traditionally the Speaker, while embodying the authority and impartiality that characterize the office, exercises responsibility in three areas:

- presiding over the Assembly's proceedings, maintaining order, regulating debate according to the established rules of procedure and ensuring that all viewpoints may be heard;
- guarding the privileges of the Assembly and protecting the rights of its Members; and
- representing the Assembly in its relationship with Her Majesty and Her representatives, with external institutions and on ceremonial occasions.

In addition, the Speaker is the chief administrator of the Legislative Assembly Office, with ultimate responsibility for the administration and financial management of the Assembly and for providing services to its Members. In this function the Speaker is assisted by the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services.

The Assembly elects the Speaker from among its own Members as its first act at the opening of a new Legislature. The Speaker holds office until the day before the commencement of the next Legislature to ensure administrative continuity during the election period.

### 41. Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees

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Members of the Legislative Assembly elect the Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees to act as Speaker when the Speaker is absent or the office of Speaker is vacant. The chair facilitates meetings of the Committee of Supply and the Committee of the Whole. The term of this office continues after dissolution of the Assembly through the day preceding polling day.

## **42. Deputy Chair of Committees**

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Members elect the Deputy Chair of Committees to act as Speaker when the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are absent. The Deputy Chair facilitates meetings of the Committee of Supply and the Committee of the Whole in the place of the Chair of Committees. The term of this office continues after dissolution of the Assembly through the day preceding polling day.

## **43. Members' Services Committee**

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The Special Standing Committee on Members' Services is appointed at the commencement of each Legislature. The Speaker is traditionally its chair. This committee approves the annual estimates of the Legislative Assembly Office and may modify certain regulations, orders or directives governing the office's financial and personnel administration. The committee also sets Members' allowances, constituency office allowances and Members' benefits and establishes human resource and financial management policy for the Legislative Assembly Office.

# **Organization**

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## **44. Office of the Clerk**

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The Clerk is the chief officer of the Legislative Assembly and has authority and responsibility equivalent to that of a deputy minister of a government department. Under the direction of the Speaker the Clerk has both procedural and managerial responsibilities and oversees the delivery of nonpartisan services to Members of the Legislative Assembly and their staff.

The Office of the Clerk is responsible for

- providing advice, research and support to the Speaker and Members on procedural matters concerning the privileges, rules, usages and proceedings of the Assembly and co-ordinating procedural services by other officers of the Assembly;
- preparing documents of the Assembly and ensuring the safekeeping of the Assembly's documents and records;
- providing all necessary administrative and support services to the Assembly during its sittings and ensuring that essential services are provided to the Assembly Chamber;

- presiding over the election of the Speaker at the opening of a new Legislature;
- announcing the Assembly's order of business and conducting its recorded votes or divisions during its sittings; and
- supervising the officers of the Assembly, including the Director of House Services, Parliamentary Counsel and Sergeant-at-Arms.

As chief operating officer the Clerk has the following managerial responsibilities:

- directing the operation of the Legislative Assembly Office;
- authorizing all financial commitments the Assembly enters into;
- directing the preparation of the Assembly's annual estimates and advising the Members' Services Committee in their consideration and approval; and
- acting as liaison at the deputy minister level with government departments on matters related to the Assembly, the Chamber and the Legislative Assembly Office;

## **45. Communications Services**

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Communications Services provides strategic planning, consulting and design expertise to the LAO's internal and external audiences. Communications Services' responsibilities include

- supporting the organizational goals of the LAO and the mandates of all-party committees;
- delivering professional writing, design and web services in the creation of promotional and educational materials for the LAO;
- co-ordinating media relations and maintaining internal and external websites for the Legislative Assembly; and
- assisting with planning, execution and documentation in support of special events.

## **46. Broadcast Services**

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Broadcast Services oversees the accurate and high-quality broadcast production of the House proceedings. Additional responsibilities of Broadcast Services include

- managing the communication of information affecting the broadcast,
- developing guidelines and procedures for broadcast operations, and

- assisting with the co-ordination of remote broadcasts involving external media.

## **47. Legal Services/Parliamentary Counsel**

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Legal Services provides advice to the Speaker, Members, committees and the LAO, including advice on contracts, employment law and leases. Legal Services is also responsible for

- defending and asserting the rights, privileges and immunities of Members and the Assembly;
- assisting Members and caucuses in interpreting statutory provisions concerning Members' benefits, rights and immunities, including the *Legislative Assembly Act* and Members' Services Orders; and
- assisting Members with administering oaths and using their ex officio notarial powers.

Parliamentary Counsel are located within the Legal Services branch. The duties of Parliamentary Counsel include

- serving as Table Officers;
- assisting Members with drafting private Members' Bills and amendments;
- reviewing and providing advice on private Bills;
- approving petitions prior to their presentation in the Assembly; and
- preparing official copies of the Bills enacted by the Legislature.

## **48. Interparliamentary Relations**

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Interparliamentary Relations is responsible for organizing Alberta's participation in various parliamentary associations and organizations and managing relations between the Assembly and other Canadian and international parliaments. Responsibilities include

- co-ordinating the Legislative Assembly's participation in conferences, seminars and exchanges of a parliamentary nature in Canada and abroad; and
- organizing programs for incoming parliamentarians and legislators from around the world.

## **49. House Services**

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House Services oversees House and committee proceedings and is responsible for the production of various House and committee documents and records, including the official report of the debates of the Assembly and its committees, also known as *Alberta Hansard*, as well as the Order Paper, Votes and Proceedings and the *Journals*.

Other responsibilities include

- providing procedural advice to the Speaker and Members and preparing documents for the daily business of the House;
- ensuring that all administrative, financial and support services are available for the effective operation of standing and special committees of the Assembly;
- providing nonpartisan research and issue analysis as directed and in support of the mandates of the committees of the Assembly;
- processing items to be placed on notice on the Order Paper, including Bills, Motions, Written Questions, Motions for Returns and Motions Other than Government Motions; and
- maintaining custody of current and historical Assembly records.

## **50. Human Resource Services**

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Human Resource Services (HRS) provides customized human resource management, compensation and consulting services that enhance overall organizational performance. These services include:

- development and implementation of multidisciplinary human resource strategies to meet operational objectives;
- leadership and advice on human resources related issues such as organizational design and planning, recruitment, talent management and development, employee relations, health and wellness, disability management, Member remuneration and staff compensation and classification;
- management of the integrated, in-house payroll and HR systems; and
- ensuring an efficient transition of staff and MLAs at general elections, by-elections and cabinet shuffles.

## 51. Financial Management and Administrative Services

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Financial Management and Administrative Services (FMAS) supports the Speaker, Members and the LAO by providing financial management and administrative services.

Financial Management services include budget preparation, processing of claims, expenses and allowances (Members, caucuses and branches), transaction compliance review and accounting, preparation of monthly reports for Members and branches, preparation of financial statements and co-ordination of the financial statement audit. Administrative services include furniture, equipment and supplies procurement, co-ordination of telecommunications services, constituency office services (leasing, set-up, moves, et cetera.), and property management co-ordination for LAO offices and caucuses. In addition, FMAS is also responsible for

- administering the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* as it pertains to the LAO and providing advice and assistance in access and privacy matters for Members and the LAO;
- managing the development and implementation of an information and records management program for the Legislative Assembly and providing advice and support on information records management issues to Members of the Assembly and staff; and
- providing risk management and insurance coverage, advice and claims co-ordination services to Members and LAO branches.

## 52. Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services

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Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services (VCSS) provides services ranging from developing and managing public programming to providing security services for the Legislative Assembly, its precincts and all constituency offices. In addition, VCSS advises MLAs, constituency staff and LAO employees on security matters, liaises with external intelligence, public safety and security organizations and is responsible for

- directing the LAO security access card program;
- directing the Page program;
- taking attendance of Members in the House;
- providing the care and custody of the Mace;
- the furniture and fittings of the Assembly;
- directing the operation of the Interpretive Centre and Gift Shop; and

- offering services to the public, including guided tours, educational programs, special events and gallery bookings.

## **53. Library Services**

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Library Services provides nonpartisan, confidential and timely information, news and reference services to Members and their constituency and caucus staff as well as the LAO. Applying both a traditional approach and the latest technology, Library Services is also responsible for

- compiling and delivering a customized daily electronic news service to Members;
- responding to Members' information needs through subscription databases and e-books as well as an electronic government documents repository and network; collecting and providing access to information on social, economic, environmental and other public policy issues;
- collecting and providing access to information on public policy matters in areas such as health, laws, science, business, environment, energy, social issues and education; and
- preserving and chronicling information about Alberta's history and parliamentary heritage, including data about Members and electoral divisions.

## **54. Information Technology Services**

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Information Technology Services (ITS) provides all technology services to the Speaker, Members, caucuses, constituency offices and LAO branches. ITS focuses on introducing the latest in technology to best serve the needs of the stakeholders. Services include

- acquiring, deploying and maintaining all hardware and software,
- procuring, contract negotiating and supporting mobile devices,
- co-ordinating and delivering IT training;
- supporting all network infrastructure, including network servers, cabling and wireless facilities;
- enforcing policies and guidelines to provide a secure IT environment;
- providing consultation services to analyze business needs and deploy the best technology solution;
- developing and deploying applications on multiple platforms, including desktop and web;

- supporting enterprise applications with a focus on workflow and integrating with the business processes; and
- supporting audiovisual and multimedia applications, including streaming of House and committee proceedings.



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# House Procedures

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## The Legislature

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### 55. Life of a Legislature

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By statute and the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the Legislative Assembly may not continue for longer than five years from the date fixed for the return of the writ at a general election; that is, 10 days after the official results have been announced.

### 56. Becoming a Member

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Under the *Legislative Assembly Act* a successful candidate officially becomes a Member of the Legislative Assembly 18 days after polling day. This may be delayed if election results are appealed within the eight-day period after the official count is announced. The official count is announced 10 days after polling day. However, when a candidate is elected by acclamation, he or she becomes a Member on the date that nominations close in that constituency.

### 57. Sessions

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By statute and the *Constitution Act, 1982*, at least one sitting of the Legislature must be held each year, and the interval between the last sitting day of one session and the first sitting day of the next can be no more than 12 months.

The Legislative Assembly is called into session by a proclamation issued under the seal of the province and signed by the Lieutenant Governor or, in the Lieutenant Governor's absence, by the Administrator, who is typically the Chief Justice of Alberta.

In accordance with the Standing Orders and unless otherwise ordered, the Assembly meets for a spring sitting commencing the second Tuesday in February and concluding no later than the first Thursday in June. The fall sitting commences on the last Monday of October and concludes no later than the first Thursday in December.

As soon as possible after January 15 each year the Clerk must publish a sessional calendar that indicates the days on which the Assembly shall sit and which weeks will be constituency weeks, when the Assembly will stand adjourned. These days are provided to the Clerk by the Government House Leader

following consultation with opposition House leaders. The spring or fall sitting of the Assembly may be shortened or extended by passage of a motion.

*Note: The government may advise the Speaker that the public interest requires the Assembly to meet on a certain date, and the Speaker shall give notice that the Assembly shall meet at that time to transact its business.*

## **Prorogation and Dissolution**

Prorogation terminates a session of the Legislature and all remaining business on the Order Paper. The Legislature is prorogued by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor on the advice of the Premier.

To be considered again, items that “die on the Order Paper” have to be reintroduced in a subsequent session. However, under Standing Order 51 a member of Executive Council may, on one day’s notice, move to reinstate a government Bill “from a previous session of the current Legislature to the same stage that the Bill stood at the time of prorogation and the motion shall not be subject to debate or amendment.” Under Standing Order 50 returns or papers ordered by the Assembly that have not yet been provided must be tabled at the next session without renewal of the order.

Dissolution terminates the Legislature itself. A Legislature is dissolved by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor on the advice of the Premier.

## **58. Sittings**

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During a session of the Legislature the normal daily sittings of the Assembly are from 1:30 to 6 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday. Upon passage of a government motion the Assembly may meet on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday evenings commencing at 7:30 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays the Assembly adjourns at 6 p.m. until the next sitting day. On Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. the Assembly adjourns without motion until Monday. Standing Order 3(3) lists holidays when the Assembly does not meet. The Standing Orders provide for a constituency week for every three sitting weeks unless varied by the sessional calendar referred to in section 58 of the Members’ Guide.

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## Responsibilities of Members

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### 59. Statutory Oath/Affirmation of Allegiance

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All Members elected or re-elected to the Legislative Assembly must take and subscribe to an oath of allegiance or make a solemn declaration and affirmation of allegiance before taking their places in the Assembly.

#### Oath of Allegiance

I, (*Member's name*), do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Her heirs and successors according to law. So help me God.

#### Affirmation of Allegiance

I, (*Member's name*), do solemnly and truly declare and affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Her heirs and successors according to law.

Members take the oath or make the affirmation after the time limit for appealing the results of an election has expired. The eight-day appeal period follows the returning officer's announcement of the official count, which occurs 10 days after polling day. Usually all Members of a caucus take the oath or make affirmation at the same time, and Members are advised of the time and place by the Speaker's office. Members who are unable to attend at that time, independent Members and any Members elected in a by-election may contact the Clerk of the Assembly for an appointment to take the oath or make the affirmation.

### 60. Conflicts of Interest and Disclosure Obligations under the Conflicts of Interest Act

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The provisions of the *Conflicts of Interest Act* identify the responsibilities of Members to refrain from certain conduct during their terms of office. These obligations of Members are contained in part 2 and part 4 of the Act and include obligations respecting decisions furthering private interests, influence, insider information, offices and employment, gifts and benefits from persons other than the Crown, travel on noncommercial aircraft, contracts with the Crown and payments from the Crown. In addition, part 3 of the *Conflicts of Interest Act* contains requirements for Members to file disclosure statements and returns with the office of the Ethics Commissioner. The Ethics Commissioner may investigate any complaint of an alleged breach of the *Conflicts of Interest Act*. Members who believe they may be in a conflict-of-interest situation are advised to consult the Ethics Commissioner.

Members are required to file disclosure statements with the Ethics Commissioner within 60 days after becoming a Member of the Legislative Assembly, within 60 days after being appointed to the Executive Council if the Member has not filed a current disclosure statement as a Member, and in each subsequent year at the time specified by the Ethics Commissioner. The Ethics Commissioner requests an interview with each Member as soon as practicable after a Member has filed a disclosure statement to ensure that the Member has made adequate disclosure and to advise about the Member's obligations under the *Conflicts of Interest Act*. A Member must also file with the Ethics Commissioner an amending disclosure statement within 30 days after the occurrence of any material changes to the information.

Members who have any questions regarding their obligations under the *Conflicts of Interest Act* should contact the office of the Ethics Commissioner.

## **61. Notary Public/Commissioner for Oaths**

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Each Member may act *ex officio* as a notary public and commissioner for oaths in and for the province of Alberta. Members may administer oaths and affidavits to others anywhere within Alberta. As notaries public they may use a personal notarial seal to certify documents, commercial papers, affidavits and other official documents for use both within and outside the province of Alberta.

Many provincial and federal government forms as well as nongovernment forms require authorization before a notary public or commissioner for oaths. By acting in this capacity, Members may provide important benefits to their constituents.

However, authorizing, authenticating and swearing documents can be complex procedures, and Members are strongly advised to contact Legal Services for instruction prior to administering oaths or exercising notarial powers.

To order notarial seals, rubber stamps, specimen signature cards and related items, Members should contact Financial Management and Administrative Services. For further information on the duties and responsibilities of these offices Members should contact Legal Services.

Members must not notarize or commission documents after they cease to be Members or after an election is called.

## 62. Sponsoring Petitions

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Any citizen or group of citizens may petition the Assembly for redress of a grievance. However, since the Assembly considers only those matters brought before it by its own Members, citizens may exercise their right to petition only through a Member. Therefore, constituents may from time to time ask individual Members to help them prepare or present a petition.

By parliamentary tradition Members are not obliged to present petitions even from their own constituents, and presenting a petition does not imply agreement with the request. By convention members of Executive Council do not present petitions. Members presenting petitions are required to endorse their name on the first page. Petitions must meet certain criteria as to form and may not ask the Assembly to directly spend public funds or to do anything that would affect the privileges of the Assembly. Parliamentary Counsel must approve petitions as to form before they can be presented to the Assembly.

Petitions require a notice on each page stating that the name and address of persons signing the petition may be made available to the public. Only those petitions that have been presented are available to the public. Guidelines for submitting petitions to the Legislative Assembly can be found on the Legislative Assembly website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

Members requiring assistance with a petition should contact Legal Services.

## Procedure in the Assembly

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### 63. Parliamentary Procedure

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Parliamentary procedure governs how the Assembly conducts its business. It is a combination of two elements:

- formal, written rules, called Standing Orders, which govern such matters as the Assembly's order of business, the format for debates, how time is allocated and how Members conduct themselves; and
- the usages and precedents of the Assembly as developed over time through interpretation, Speakers' rulings and parliamentary tradition.

The Standing Orders cover most matters that come before the Assembly, and they are always consulted first. In any situation not covered by Standing Orders, the Speaker refers to past practice of the Assembly to determine whether the situation has an applicable precedent. In the absence of such

a precedent the Speaker considers precedents in Canadian and other Commonwealth parliaments.

The authorities most often consulted in these cases are *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* [2nd ed.] and *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, both of which cover the practice in the Canadian House of Commons, and *Erskine May's Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*, which is the authority for United Kingdom practice. However, the main authority for transacting business in the Assembly is always its own Standing Orders. Other sources are consulted in the order above only when Standing Orders or past practice of the Assembly cannot resolve the issue.

Communications Services sends copies of Standing Orders to new Members plus additional copies to Members who require them. From time to time the Assembly may pass a motion to amend the Standing Orders. Legal Services distributes copies of individual amendments as they occur.

Reference copies of *Beauchesne's*, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* and *Erskine May* and other authorities are available in the Legislature Library and in the bookcases in the Assembly Chamber.

## **64. Points of Order**

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Any Member may bring any perceived divergence from the Standing Orders or practice of the Assembly to the Speaker's immediate attention. In these cases the Member interrupts debate by rising and saying, "Point of order, Mr./Madam Speaker" and then stating concisely the point in question and the pertinent authority. The Speaker may then allow debate on the matter and rule on the matter either at that time or later. Points of order that arise during the daily Routine, including Oral Question Period, are dealt with after question period.

## **65. Privilege**

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Privilege in the parliamentary sense is all the rights and powers, other than the power to legislate, enjoyed collectively by the Assembly and individually by its Members without which they could not perform their duties.

Among the privileges the Assembly possesses collectively are

- the right to provide for its composition, including the right to secure writs to fill vacancies in its membership and to determine whether Members are qualified to sit although not whether they have been duly elected;

- the right to regulate its own internal affairs and procedures, including the power to establish, amend or suspend its procedural rules;
- the power to compel witnesses to attend and documents to be produced;
- the power to expel Members the Assembly considered unfit to be Members;
- the power to eject strangers from the House and its precincts; and
- the right to control publication of the debates and proceedings of the Assembly.

Probably the most important privilege enjoyed by Members is a special degree of freedom of speech. Members are protected from liability for anything they say in the Assembly or any of its committees or for anything contained in a written notice that they have given—for example, a motion or written question—even if it is defamatory. This privilege does not imply, however, that Members may say anything they wish in the Assembly, since the rules of debate require proper parliamentary language. Some of the matters that constitute breaches of privilege or contempts are outlined in section 10 of the *Legislative Assembly Act*.

Members should bring any perceived breaches of privilege to the Assembly's attention at the earliest opportunity. There are two ways to do so.

1. At any point in the Assembly's proceedings Members may rise as soon as they hear words or observe events they consider a violation of privilege.
2. Members may call attention to a matter of privilege arising on a previous day by providing the Speaker with a brief written explanation of the alleged breach at least two hours before the day's sitting opens. They may then rise immediately before Orders of the Day is called, point out the alleged breach and explain it.

The Speaker may allow debate on the matter then or defer it. The Speaker's role is to determine whether a *prima facie* breach of privilege has occurred and whether the matter has been raised at the earliest opportunity. In either case if the Speaker finds that no breach of privilege has occurred, the matter is dropped. If, however, the Speaker decides that there is a *prima facie* breach and that it was raised promptly, any Member may give notice, not later than at the conclusion of the next sitting day, of a motion to deal further with the matter. Usually a Member moves that the matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing. This committee may hold meetings to discuss the matter before reporting back to the Assembly.

According to *Beauchesne's* paragraph 27, "A genuine question of privilege is a most serious matter and should be taken seriously by the House." Therefore, Members are cautioned about invoking parliamentary privilege to comment on the accuracy of reports in the media or to point out a dispute as to facts with another Member. Such matters are more properly personal explanations and may proceed only with the indulgence of the Assembly.

## **66. Voting**

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No motion in the Assembly or its committees requires a seconder although there is traditionally a seconder on the motion for address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Every Member in the Assembly Chamber at the time a matter comes to a vote is required to vote. Members who do not wish to vote or who believe they should not vote because of a direct pecuniary interest in a matter should leave the Chamber before the Speaker puts the question. In cases involving direct pecuniary interest, Members must, according to section 2(2) of the *Conflicts of Interest Act*, declare that interest and withdraw from the proceeding.

Voting in the Assembly is by simple majority. The Speaker first calls a voice vote of "ayes" and "noes" and announces the result. At this point any three Members may request a recorded vote, or division, by standing or otherwise indicating their request for a recorded vote. The division bell is then rung to call all Members to the Chamber, and the recorded vote takes place 10 minutes later.

Divisions may take place in committees of the whole Assembly but not in other committees of the Assembly. However, any Member may request a recorded vote for the committee transcript and minutes.

## **67. Quorum**

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For the Assembly to meet and exercise its powers, at least 20 Members must be present, including the Speaker, Deputy Speaker or Acting Speaker. If the Speaker's attention is drawn to the absence of a quorum, the division bells are sounded for one minute, and if a quorum is then not present, the Speaker may declare a recess or adjourn the Assembly, in which case the adjournment time and the names of the Members present are recorded in Votes and Proceedings.

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# Documents of the Assembly

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## 68. Introduction

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The Legislative Assembly Office publishes and distributes a number of documents related to the sittings of the Assembly. These are the Order Paper, Votes and Proceedings, *Journals*, *Alberta Hansard*, Standing Orders, the Consolidated Members' Services Orders and Bills. The office also maintains a website and other online services to enable Members to access and search pertinent documents. This section briefly describes these documents and their availability. Also discussed are sessional papers, a term covering a wide variety of documents tabled with the Assembly.

## 69. Order Paper

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Each day the Clerk's office publishes the Order Paper, the Assembly's agenda. A complete Order Paper, listing all items of business that could be considered by the Assembly, is published on Monday, the only day on which private Members' business is discussed. An abbreviated Order Paper, listing only government business, is published on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. A separate section of the Order Paper contains the required notice of items of business to come before the Assembly on subsequent days. Items listed on the Order Paper are not necessarily dealt with in order, nor are all items dealt with on any sitting day.

Copies of the Order Paper are delivered to Members who wish to receive paper copies and are also posted on the Assembly website, [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca). Questions regarding distribution of the Order Paper should be directed to *Hansard* at 780.427.1302.

## 70. Votes and Proceedings

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The Votes and Proceedings, also called Votes, are the Assembly's minutes, the official record of the Assembly's daily business. Typical entries include stages of Bills, proceedings of committees of the whole Assembly, outcome of motions, adjournments of debates, divisions and documents tabled or filed.

House Services is responsible for preparing Votes and Proceedings at the end of each sitting day. Printed copies of Votes and Proceedings are available in the Chamber each sitting day and by Member request may be delivered to Member offices. Votes and Proceedings are also posted on the Assembly website, [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca). Questions regarding distribution of Votes and Proceedings should be directed to *Hansard* at 780.427.1302.

## **71. Journals**

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The *Journals* are the complete, official, indexed record of a session and are compiled from the Votes and Proceedings of that session, incorporating any corrections. Questions regarding distribution of the *Journals* should be directed to *Hansard* at 780.427.1302.

## **72. Alberta Hansard**

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*Alberta Hansard* publishes the official report of the debates of the Assembly and its committees, provides index information on those debates and operates the Assembly's sound amplification and recording systems. *Hansard's* editorial policy is outlined in Standing Order 113, which stipulates that the final report must accurately reflect what was said and that editing is limited to ensuring correct grammar, spelling and punctuation; observing correct parliamentary forms; and minimizing superfluous repetition and redundancies.

Inquiries about services provided by the *Hansard* office should be directed to the Managing Editor of *Hansard* at 780.427.1875.

### **72.1 Blues and Suggested Corrections**

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Initial printed *Hansard* transcripts in five-minute segments, called Blues, are posted in the Members' lounges, Speaker's office, Legislature Library and the *Hansard* office as soon as they are available, which is normally within 60 to 90 minutes of the proceedings they report. Electronic copies of the Blues for House sittings and Legislature committees are also available on the Assembly intranet site, OurHouse.

Members are encouraged to suggest corrections to the Blues if they notice any inaccuracies. Because the final *Hansard* is produced within 24 hours, Members are asked to submit their suggested corrections to the *Hansard* office no later than 9 p.m. the day of an afternoon sitting and no later than 10 a.m. after an evening sitting. Proposed corrections submitted after these deadlines may still be considered for inclusion in the bound volumes. Members may use a Member's suggested corrections form, available in the Members' lounges, or call the *Hansard* office with their suggested corrections.

*Hansard* does not make changes that are not supported by the audio. Members wishing to correct their mistakes on the record normally rise in the Assembly to correct those mistakes, and *Hansard* footnotes those corrections in the record.

## **72.2 Delivery Times**

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The final *Hansard* issues covering day sittings are delivered the next morning to offices in the Legislature Building and Legislature Annex.

Committee transcripts are posted on the Assembly's website.

## **72.3 Research**

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A *Hansard* editor takes notes during all meetings of the Assembly and its committees. To ensure the accuracy of the final text, editors often request research material by sending a green request form to the relevant Member. Typical requests ask for the correct spelling of names Members have mentioned or copies of quoted material. Because of *Hansard*'s publication deadline it is important that *Hansard* receive this material as quickly as possible. *Hansard* photocopies all such material and returns it immediately to the Member. Any material received from a Member is treated as confidential.

## **72.4 Hansard Subscriptions**

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Initial printed copies of the daily *Hansard* are available in the Chamber each sitting day and by Member request may be delivered to Member offices. Members may purchase additional subscriptions for the daily issues of a session. For information on subscriptions or deliveries call *Hansard* at 780.427.1302.

## **72.5 Index**

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*Hansard* produces a cumulative index of the current session of the Assembly by speaker and by subject. A weekly printout of this index is available at the *Hansard* office, in the Legislature Library and in caucus research areas by request. Also, the electronic version is posted on the Assembly's website. At the end of session the final index is printed and included with the bound volumes of *Hansard*.

## **72.6 Hansard Online Searching**

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*Hansard* makes the complete text of Assembly proceedings available on the Legislative Assembly website so that anyone can search the text for references to specific keywords.

## **72.7 Bill Status Report**

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The Bill status report is a quick reference to the status of Bills before the Assembly, including *Hansard* page numbers for the relevant debate. The Bill status report is normally included in the Thursday issue of *Hansard*. It is also available on the Legislative Assembly website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

## **72.8 Speech Reprints**

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Members may order paper, electronic or audio reprints of speeches they made in the Assembly by submitting the online request form on the LAO website or by contacting the *Hansard* office at 780.427.1302.

## **72.9 Bound Volumes**

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Each Member may receive a set of bound volumes following prorogation or dissolution. These volumes consist of all debates of a session plus the final annual index and Bill status report. Members may also purchase additional sets of bound volumes. For information on the bound volumes and to notify the *Hansard* office that you wish to receive a set, contact the *Hansard* office at 780.427.1302.

## **72.10 Members' Services Orders**

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Under the *Legislative Assembly Act* the Members' Services Committee may pass orders governing Members' indemnities, allowances and services as well as other orders pertaining to the Legislative Assembly Office. Communications Services compiles and distributes a consolidated looseleaf edition of Members' Services Committee Orders plus required updates to all Members. Members should direct any inquiries about the distribution of Members' Services Orders to Communications Services at 780.427.1302.

## **73. Bills**

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Bills are basically of two types, public and private. Public Bills may be further divided into government and private Members' Bills. Public Bills involve matters affecting all Albertans while private Bills concern only a specific person or group. Subject to certain conditions, Members may present either type to the Assembly. All government Bills are public Bills.

Government Bills are drafted by Legislative Counsel in the Ministry of Justice and are numbered from 1 to 200. Private Members' Bills are drafted by

Parliamentary Counsel. Private Members' public Bills are numbered from 201. Private Bills are numbered from 1 with the prefix Pr; hence, Pr1, Pr2 and so on.

All Bills are printed prior to being introduced in the Assembly. Parliamentary Counsel is in charge of producing all private Bills and private Members' Bills while government Bills are produced under the direction of Legislative Counsel.

Members receive one copy each of the Bills introduced in the Assembly. These are delivered to their desks in the Chamber. In addition, private Members receive 50 copies of any private Members' Bills they introduce. Inquiries should be directed to *Hansard* at 780.427.1302.

Bills are available on the Assembly website shortly after introduction. Copies of amendments accepted by the Assembly are available on the website the following day. Bills from previous sessions can also be found on the Assembly website in PDF format.

*Note: Amendments accepted by the Assembly in previous sessions are available dating back to the First Session of the 27th Legislature (2008). Bills are provided for reference only and are shown as introduced at First Reading.*

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## **74. Statutes**

A Bill becomes an Act, or statute, once the Assembly passes it and the Lieutenant Governor gives it Royal Assent. The term statute is derived from the Latin *statutum*, meaning "it is decided." At the end of the Assembly's sittings in any session Legislative Counsel incorporates all amendments into the Bills passed at those sittings and prepares them as statutes. They are then consolidated periodically into the multi-volume looseleaf edition of the *Statutes of Alberta*, which Members may purchase from the Queen's Printer Bookstore at 780.427.4952. Reference copies are also available in the Chamber and the Legislature Library.

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## **75. Statutes Online**

The complete text of the *Statutes of Alberta* is available in the Reference section of the Assembly intranet site under Alberta Statutes. The Assembly also has a subscription to the Queen's Printer website, which has a searchable database of the statutes.

This link is on the Assembly's intranet site, OurHouse, under Resources, QP Source. For information about online searching of the Statutes of Alberta, please contact the Legislature Library at 780.427.2473.

## **76. Sessional Papers**

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Sessional papers are documents that are either tabled in the Assembly as required by statute or order of the Assembly or voluntarily provided by Members as information to the Assembly.

The Assembly requires five copies of all tabled documents. Responses to written questions and motions for returns ordered by the Assembly require additional copies, one for the Member who asked the written question or moved the motion for a return, one for the Leader of the Opposition and a sufficient number of additional copies must also be tabled for distribution to the leader of any other party or group in opposition.

Copies of documents required to be tabled by statute or order of the Assembly, other than responses to questions or motions for returns, may be distributed to all Members at their desks in the Chamber. This is particularly the case with annual reports of departments, boards, agencies, commissions and so on. Copies are also available in the Legislature Library.

## **77. Legislative Assembly Website**

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Members are encouraged to visit the Assembly's website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca). It contains a variety of information about the Assembly and its business, including an MLA directory, online access to *Hansard*, Bills and amendments, the Order Paper, Votes and Proceedings, Legislature Library catalogue, electronic government documents, Standing Orders, the Bill status report, the *Citizen's Guide*, the annual report of the Assembly, information on educational programs and other visitor services, Assembly news releases and live and archival streamed audio/video of Assembly proceedings.

# **Business of the Assembly**

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## **78. Opening and Routine**

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The Standing Orders govern the sequence of business of the Assembly. The notes that follow briefly describe the individual items that comprise the Assembly's business.

Members are called to each sitting by a bell, which sounds 10 minutes before the sitting starts. Members enter the Assembly Chamber through the south doors off the Members' lounge, which they may reach via the Confederation

Room and Room 313. The main entrance to the Chamber has been designated a wheelchair entrance.

The sitting opens with the Speaker's procession. At the Sergeant-at-Arms' call, "Order, order. Mr./Madam Speaker," all Members and visitors rise and remain standing while the Speaker offers prayers. At the conclusion of prayers all take their seats and the Clerk calls the items of the daily Routine in the sequence in which they appear on the Order Paper:

- O *Canada* (first sitting day of each week)
- Oral Question Period, beginning at 1:50 p.m. daily
- Introduction of Visitors
- Introduction of Guests
- Ministerial Statements
- Members' Statements
- Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees
- Presenting Petitions
- Notices of Motions
- Introduction of Bills
- Tabling Returns and Reports
- Tablings to the Clerk
- Projected Government Business (Thursday)

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## **79. Introduction of Visitors**

The Speaker, a minister or designated Member introduces visiting parliamentarians, diplomats, officials and others to be recognized. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery.

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## **80. Introduction of Guests**

Members make brief, nonpartisan introductions of school groups and other visitors in the galleries.

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## **81. Ministerial Statements**

Under this item ministers may make brief statements on matters concerning their areas of responsibility. A member of the Official Opposition may then respond briefly.

## **82. Oral Question Period**

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Members question ministers regarding topics of current importance related to their responsibilities. So that the Assembly may deal with as many questions as possible within the 50 minutes allotted, Members are asked to keep their questions brief and framed to permit as concise and pertinent a response as possible. Members whose questions are not of a pressing nature or which require lengthy or detailed responses may submit them under Written Questions.

There are certain rules governing a Member's conduct and the types of oral questions they may ask. These are covered by *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, pages 491 through 510. However, the caucuses themselves determine the order of questioners and then give the Speaker a prioritized list.

The rotation of questions during Oral Question Period is often determined by a House leaders' agreement or by a Speaker's ruling. Preambles to supplementary questions are not permitted. Questions and answers may not exceed 35 seconds.

## **83. Members' Statements**

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Private Members may speak on matters of concern to themselves or their constituents. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays six private Members may speak for up to two minutes each. On Mondays and Thursdays seven private Members may speak for up to two minutes each.

## **84. Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees**

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The chairs of the various committees appointed by resolution of the Assembly present their committees' reports.

## **85. Presenting Petitions**

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When presenting petitions, Members may state only the number of signatures on the petition, the geographical area or sector of the public represented by the signatures and the remedy the petition seeks. The Assembly's guidelines for petitions are found in Standing Orders 84 through 88. All petitions must be submitted to Parliamentary Counsel for approval at least one sitting day prior to being presented in the Assembly. Only petitions that are in order may be presented during the daily Routine. Members or persons wishing to submit petitions may wish to consult the Guidelines for Submitting Petitions to the Assembly, which is available from Legal Services or on the Assembly's website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

## **86. Notices of Motions**

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While business to be brought before the Assembly is normally placed on notice on the Order Paper, Ministers may give oral notice of a motion or a Bill to appear on the Order Paper for the next sitting day. Members may also give oral notice of motions to debate matters of urgent public importance. Such motions are moved after Oral Question Period and before Orders of the Day.

## **87. Introduction of Bills**

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Members introduce all public and private Bills under this item after one day's notice pursuant to Standing Order 39(1)(d). To introduce a Bill, the sponsoring Member rises when recognized by the Speaker and requests leave of the Assembly to introduce the Bill. The Member identifies the Bill by number and title and then very briefly describes its purpose without speaking to its merits.

Bills proposing that public funds be spent or that impose or increase a tax are called money Bills and can only be introduced by a minister. This is because in the parliamentary system the government is responsible for managing public funds and thus has the sole prerogative to make legislative proposals that have direct fiscal implications. The Constitution requires that Bills providing for the expenditure of public money must be accompanied by a recommendation from the Lieutenant Governor.

Bills are not debated on introduction. In recognition of the parliamentary tradition that no suitable subject should be denied a hearing, the Assembly grants leave for all Bills to be introduced, at which time they are deemed to have received first reading. The Bills can then come before the Assembly for debate on a future occasion.

## **88. Tabling Returns and Reports**

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Replies to written questions previously accepted by ministers, returns ordered under Motions for Returns and all reports required by statute are tabled in the Assembly. Members also present their voluntary tablings at this time. Standing Order 37 specifies the number of copies required of each type of document.

## **89. Tablings to the Clerk**

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Documents may be tabled by providing the required number of copies to the Clerk prior to 11 a.m. any day the Assembly sits. If the tabling is in order, the Clerk will read the title of the document when Tablings to the Clerk is called in the daily Routine.

## **90. Projected Government Business**

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On Thursdays the Official Opposition House Leader may ask one question regarding the government's projected business for the next sitting week.

## **91. Orders of the Day**

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When the Speaker calls Orders of the Day, the Assembly deals with the various items of public business for that day. Public business falls into two general categories, government business and private Members' business.

Members take up items on the Order Paper in order of precedence except government orders, whose priority is determined by the government. Government business falls under four main headings on the Order Paper: Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech, Committee of Supply, Government Motions and Government Bills and Orders.

## **92. Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech**

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Each session of the Legislature opens with the Lieutenant Governor delivering the Speech from the Throne, in which the government outlines its initiatives for that session. Following the Speech from the Throne, the Premier moves that it "be taken into consideration" the following sitting day. On that day two designated Members of the government caucus move and second a motion thanking the Lieutenant Governor for the speech. The throne speech debate follows.

This motion remains as the first item of business on the Order Paper for no more than 10 sitting days. Standing Order 19(2) establishes a limit of one amendment and one subamendment to the motion, and Standing Order 19(1)(a) and (b) limits the length of time the Assembly may debate each.

## **93. Committee of Supply Procedure**

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This item appears on the Order Paper following a motion that "the Assembly resolve itself into committee, when called, to consider the supply to be granted to Her Majesty." The purpose of this committee is to consider government estimates in detail.

The committee, which is comprised of all Members, sits at the call of the government to consider interim and supplementary estimates, the main estimates for Executive Council (if ordered) and to vote on the main estimates considered by policy field committees.

## 94. Government Motions

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Government motions are resolutions sponsored by ministers. They must receive appropriate notice prior to being called for debate.

## 95. Government Bills and Orders

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Under this heading Members deal with the various stages of Bills sponsored by the government. A private government Member occasionally pilots a government Bill, and on these occasions after the Bill has been introduced, the Government House Leader moves a motion to place it on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

Every Bill, regardless of whether it is public or private or whether it is sponsored by a minister or a private Member, must receive three readings and study by the Committee of the Whole before receiving Royal Assent and becoming law. Standing Order 77 provides that these readings take place on different days. A Bill may receive more than one reading on a single day with the unanimous consent of the Assembly.

A Bill receives first reading by being introduced under Introduction of Bills. The most important stage it must pass is second reading; at issue is the very principle of the Bill. The sponsor moves second reading of a Bill and may comment on it. At that point Members debate the principle of the Bill, after which the sponsor closes debate. The Assembly then votes on the motion for second reading. If the motion passes, the Bill is automatically referred to Committee of the Whole.

Bills may also be referred to policy field committees after first or second reading.

A Bill comes under detailed study in Committee of the Whole, a committee comprised of all Members of the Legislative Assembly and facilitated by the Chair of Committees. The Speaker leaves the Chamber when the committee meets.

The committee may examine the text of the Bill clause by clause, line by line and, if necessary, word by word. At this stage Members debate and vote on any amendments to the Bill. There are a number of limitations on amendments, and these are listed in *Beauchesne's* paragraph 698 and chapter 16 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*.

After detailed study of a Bill the chair asks if the committee wishes to report it. If the committee agrees, the Bill is reported to the Assembly. When the committee does not conclude its consideration of a Bill at one sitting, the committee “reports progress” on it.

A sitting of the Committee of the Whole concludes on a motion that the committee rise and report. When this motion is approved, the Speaker enters and resumes the chair. The committee rises and reports to the Assembly the titles of the Bills the committee has discussed and asks leave to sit again. Then the Speaker asks the Assembly if it agrees with the report. This question is not debatable. If Members agree, all Bills reported out of committee, except those on which only progress has been reported, proceed to third reading.

The final stage through which the Bill must pass in the Assembly is third reading. As the Bill's principle has already been approved at second reading and its contents discussed in detail and amended, if need be, in committee, third reading debate is limited to the Bill itself as reported by the committee. However, it can also be the last opportunity for Members to oppose a Bill or try to prevent its passage. If the Assembly agrees to a motion that the Bill be read a third time, the Bill is passed and awaits Royal Assent before becoming law.

For further information on how public Bills are passed, Members may refer to Standing Orders 70 through 83.

## **96. Private Members' Business**

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Monday afternoons are devoted to the concerns of private Members; that is, Members who are not ministers. These concerns come under four headings on the Order Paper: Written Questions, Motions for Returns, Motions Other than Government Motions and Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders. The business transacted under each of these headings is briefly discussed below. Standing Orders 7 and 8 provide time limits for each item.

## **97. Written Questions**

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Written questions are questions that are either not sufficiently urgent to qualify as oral questions or require lengthy or complex responses that not only take time to prepare but are also too long to be asked orally. Members wishing to ask a question of this type complete a notice of question form, which may be obtained on OurHouse, the Assembly's intranet site. In preparing the text of a written question, Members should bear in mind that, like oral questions, written questions are governed by certain rules. These guidelines and historical perspective can be found in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, pages 517 through 526.

Members return a completed notice of question form to have the question appear on notice on the Order Paper, after which it is added to the Order Paper's list of written questions. Once a question is disposed of, it is dropped from the Order Paper, and its outcome is reported in Votes and Proceedings for that day.

On Thursday afternoons under Notices of Motions the Government House Leader gives notice of any written questions that will be accepted or otherwise dealt with on the following Monday.

On Monday afternoons the Clerk reads the number, text and name of the sponsor of any written question for which notice of acceptance has been given. The Clerk then calls written questions for which notice has been given to be dealt with (either amended or rejected). The government then indicates that it accepts or rejects the question. The government is not obliged to answer a written question but must either accept, accept with amendments or reject it within 15 sitting days of its appearance on the Order Paper. An amendment to a written question must be approved by Parliamentary Counsel the Wednesday preceding the day the amendment is moved. A copy of the amendment must also be provided to the mover of the written question by 11 a.m. on the day the amendment is to be moved. The original approved amendment plus 95 copies must be delivered to House Services in Room 315 of the Legislature Building by 11 a.m. on the day the amendment is to be moved. At the end of the debate the Assembly votes on the motion. If the motion passes, the government must table an answer in the Assembly within 30 sitting days.

## **98. Motions for Returns**

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Motions for returns request that the government produce documents for the information of the Assembly. Members wishing to place such motions before the Assembly complete a notice of motion for a return form, which they can obtain on OurHouse, the Assembly's intranet site. Members return the completed form, and the motion is then placed on notice on the Order Paper. Once a motion for a return has been disposed of, it is dropped from the Order Paper, and its outcome is reported in the Votes and Proceedings for that day.

On Thursday afternoons under Notices of Motions the Government House Leader gives notice of any motions for returns that will be accepted or otherwise dealt with on the following Monday. On Monday afternoon the Clerk reads the number, text and name of the sponsor of any motion for a return for which notice of acceptance has been given. The Clerk then calls motions for returns for which notice has been given to be dealt with (either amended or rejected). The mover then rises to move the motion and begins the debate on it.

A minister or the Government House Leader then rises and recommends that the Assembly accept the motion with some amendments or defeat it. An amendment to a motion for a return must be approved by Parliamentary Counsel the Wednesday preceding the day the amendment is moved. A copy of the amendment must also be provided to the mover of the motion for a return by 11 a.m. on the day the amendment is to be moved. Motions for returns are debatable. Following debate the Speaker asks the sponsoring Member to conclude debate, after which the Assembly votes on the motion.

If the Assembly approves the motion, it becomes an order for a return, which commits the government to tabling the requested information or documents in the Assembly. If the motion is defeated, no further action is taken. As with written questions, motions for returns must be dealt with within 15 sitting days of appearing on the Order Paper and the reply tabled within 30 sitting days of approval of the motion.

## **99. Motions Other than Government Motions**

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Motions other than government motions are motions sponsored by private Members. These are debated in the Assembly between 5 and 6 p.m. on Mondays. Members submit the notice of motion form, available on OurHouse, the Assembly's intranet site. These motions are debated in the order in which they appear on the Order Paper.

A Member may have no more than two notices of motions other than government motions in his or her name on the Order Paper at the same time.

Motions are numbered by draw as outlined in Standing Order 41 before being listed on the Order Paper; additional motions are added to the bottom of the list. Upon providing four sitting days' notice and prior to being moved in the Assembly, a motion other than a government motion may be withdrawn by a Member. The Assembly deals with these motions in order, and each motion retains its place on the Order Paper until Members have debated it for 60 minutes unless it is voted on sooner. After 60 minutes the Speaker puts the question.

## **100. Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders**

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These are Bills sponsored by private Members. Any Member who is not a minister may present a Bill on any matter within the jurisdiction of the Assembly so long as it does not propose to spend public funds or to impose or increase a tax. Although the sponsor alone determines the actual content

of the Bill, Parliamentary Counsel drafts the Bill and/or advises on any related matters.

Bills are available on the Assembly website shortly after introduction. Copies of amendments approved by the Assembly are available on the website the following day. Prior to each session a draw is held to determine the numerical precedence of public Bills on notice by private Members, and they appear on the Order Paper in this sequence. Procedure for the draw is outlined in Standing Order 72.

A private Member's Bill must go through the same stages as a government Bill before becoming law. It retains its place on the Order Paper until it has been debated for 120 minutes at second reading, 120 minutes in Committee of the Whole and 60 minutes at third reading unless it is voted on sooner. Private Members' Bills that receive second reading must come before the Committee of the Whole within eight sitting days of receiving second reading, and those that are reported by Committee of the Whole must be moved for third reading within four sitting days of being reported by the committee.

## **Standing and Special Committees**

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### **101. Introduction**

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The Assembly appoints committees composed of its own Members to which it assigns specific responsibilities. Basically, there are three types of committees of the Assembly: committees of the whole Assembly, standing committees and special committees. The two committees of the whole Assembly have already been discussed in sections 92 and 94.

### **102. Appointment of Committees**

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There are 11 standing committees of the Assembly, including five policy field committees.

- Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing
- Public Accounts
- Private Bills
- Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
- Legislative Offices
- Members' Services

There are five policy field committees.

- Community Development
- Education
- Energy
- Finance
- Public Health and Safety

Members are appointed to these committees at the beginning of each new Legislature. Changes to membership may be made as necessary by a motion of the Assembly, but historically Committee memberships have remained substantially intact through the duration of each Legislature.

From time to time the Assembly may by motion appoint a special committee to consider and report on a particular matter. Normally the motion appointing the committee includes a date or time frame within which the committee must table its report. Unless the Assembly orders otherwise, a special committee's work is completed and it is dissolved when its report is tabled.

The membership of committees is, to the extent possible, proportional to the numerical representation of the various parties in the Assembly, with each caucus submitting nominees. Once the membership of a committee is appointed, additions or changes may be made only by a motion in the Assembly.

The Standing Orders include provision for temporary substitutions in committee membership. For a temporary substitution to be made, a written notification signed by the original committee member must be received by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and the committee chair no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting. For meetings held on Mondays, the notification must be received by the end of the business day on the preceding Friday.

A temporary substitution in committee membership may be permitted for a specific time period or for committee consideration of a specific issue. The substitution may be terminated at any time by the original committee member.

## **103. Terms of Reference of Committees**

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The motion that establishes a special committee and appoints its members also sets its terms of reference and operating authority.

The specific terms of reference for the 11 standing committees are defined either in the Standing Orders or by statute.

- The Public Accounts Committee examines the public accounts of the province and reports by the Auditor General as they become available.
- The Legislative Offices Committee makes orders governing the operation of the offices of the Auditor General, Ombudsman, Chief Electoral Officer, Ethics Commissioner, and Information and Privacy Commissioner.
- The Private Bills Committee deals with petitions for private Bills.
- The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee reviews and annually approves the business plan for the heritage fund, receives and reviews quarterly reports on the operation and results of the fund, approves the fund's annual report, reviews the fund's performance after each fiscal year-end, reports to the Assembly as to whether the mission of the fund is being fulfilled and holds public meetings with Albertans on the investment activities and results of the fund.
- The Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing Committee convenes only to consider matters the Assembly refers to it by motion.
- For terms of reference for the Members' Services Committee see section 44.
- The Community Development Committee's mandate relates to the areas of municipal affairs, tourism, parks and recreation and culture and community services.
- The Education Committee has a mandate related to the areas of education and advanced education and technology.
- The Energy Committee has a mandate related to the areas of intergovernmental, international and aboriginal relations, sustainable resource development, environment and water, agriculture and rural development and energy.
- The Finance Committee has a mandate related to the areas of finance, Treasury Board and enterprise, Service Alberta, transportation and infrastructure.
- The Public Health and Safety Committee has a mandate related to the areas of health and wellness, justice and attorney general, solicitor general and public security, human services and seniors.

Unless otherwise ordered, following the Budget Address the main estimates of departments stand referred to the policy field committees according to their respective mandates.

The schedule for consideration of the main estimates is prepared by the Government House Leader in consultation with the House leaders of other parties represented in the Assembly and the chairs of the policy field committees.

The policy field committees meet to consider the main estimates on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Each department's estimates shall receive a minimum of three hours of consideration and the estimates of Executive Council may be considered by one of the policy field committees or may be considered by Committee of Supply for a minimum of two hours. Speaking time and rotation are determined by the Standing Orders or House Leaders' agreement.

When the time allotted for a department's estimates has not expired but there are no Members who wish to speak, that department's estimates are deemed to have been considered for the time allotted.

Amendments to a department's estimates may be moved in a policy field committee, but the vote on the amendments is deferred until the date scheduled for the vote on the main estimates.

When a policy field committee has finished consideration of the main estimates of the departments within its mandate, the chair so reports to the Committee of Supply on the date scheduled for the vote on the main estimates.

## **104. Chairs of Committees**

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Chairs of standing committees are recommended when the committees are appointed. The chair preserves order and decorum at meetings, rules on points of order and tables in the Assembly any reports the Assembly may order. Like the Speaker in the Assembly, the chair of a committee votes only to break a tie.

By tradition the chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts is a member of the Official Opposition. The Standing Orders indicate that the chair of a policy field committee shall be a member of the government caucus and the deputy chair a member of the Official Opposition.

## **105. Administration of Committees**

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All matters pertaining to the operation and administration of committees are co-ordinated by the Senior Parliamentary Counsel and Director of House Services.

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## 106. Procedure in Committees

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Like the Assembly, committees follow the Standing Orders with the exception that in committee Members may speak more than once on a given topic. However, certain procedures and operations are particular to committees, and these are briefly described below.

The quorum for a committee is one-third of its members, including the chair. If at any time during a committee's proceedings the quorum drops below one-third, the committee may continue meeting but may not vote on any matter or adjourn to another item of business.

A committee may sit when the Assembly is adjourned but may not sit without leave of the Assembly when the Assembly itself is sitting. Dates, times and locations of committee meetings are set by the chair with the concurrence of the committee. Electronic notices of all committee meetings are sent to all Members of the Legislative Assembly, and notices are posted online at [www.assembly.ab.ca/committees](http://www.assembly.ab.ca/committees).

Attendance at committee meetings is recorded and included in the meeting minutes. Members who are not on a given committee may attend its meetings and participate in its deliberations but may not vote or be counted for quorum.

Since committees have no authority to discipline their members, if any question of privilege is raised in a committee, the chair adjourns the committee and reports to the Assembly. This should occur only in extreme situations. The practice is that issues raised in committee are solved in committee.

Committee meetings adjourn at the call of the chair or by majority vote. A motion for adjournment is in order at any time and is not debatable. If a motion for adjournment is defeated, another motion for adjournment may not be moved until some other item of business has intervened.

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## 107. Reports of Committees

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Often a committee's terms of reference include reporting to the Assembly. Reports of committees reflect the consensus or majority opinion of its members. Minority reports may be attached to a committee's report. Committee reports are signed by the chair and tabled in quintuplicate in the Assembly during the daily Routine under Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees. Electronic copies of reports by standing and special committees are made available on each committee's website.

## **108. Documents of Committees**

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All correspondence, briefs, submissions or other documents supplied to a committee or prepared by or for a committee are the property of that committee as long as it exists. These documents then become the property of the Assembly, and the Senior Parliamentary Counsel and Director of House Services is responsible for their safekeeping.

## **109. Minutes and Transcripts of Committees**

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The Senior Parliamentary Counsel and Director of House Services assigns staff to take minutes of committee proceedings. Committee members receive a draft copy of the minutes and may propose amendments to the minutes. Committee meeting minutes are approved by a majority vote of the committee and are signed by the committee chair and committee clerk. Documents included as appendices to approved minutes are available to the public. Copies of meeting minutes are available through the Legislature Library.

The *Hansard* office records and transcribes committee proceedings following the same editorial guidelines used in preparing the text of the Assembly's proceedings. Blues are available on the OurHouse intranet site and at the *Hansard* office usually within 24 hours. Final transcripts are posted on the Legislative Assembly website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca). Any perceived errors in these transcripts should be reported to the Managing Editor of *Alberta Hansard* at 780.427.1875.

## **110. Attendance by the Public and Media**

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Committee proceedings are open to the public and the media when space permits. Recording, broadcasting and photographing of proceedings by the media may be permitted at the discretion of the chair.

The audio of committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and archived online for the duration of the Legislature.

A committee may conduct some of its proceedings in camera. Committees go in camera on motion, at which point all nonmembers are excluded except for the committee clerk and such support staff as the committee requires until the committee passes a motion to return to an open forum. Policy field committees may only go in camera with the unanimous consent of the committee members present.

Minutes are not taken during in camera proceedings, nor are these proceedings recorded, audiostreamed or transcribed. However, both the minutes and the transcript will note that the committee held part of its deliberations at a meeting in camera. In order to be put into effect, any decisions made in camera must be reported in the committee when it sits once again in open forum.

## **111. Procedure on Private Bills**

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A private Bill applies only to a specific person or group of people such as shareholders of a company as opposed to affecting the public as a whole. The procedure for initiating and piloting a private Bill is described in Standing Orders 89 through 106. Members or petitioners may obtain a booklet entitled *How to Petition the Alberta Legislature to Pass a Private Bill* from Legal Services or the Assembly's website at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

Petitioners formally request the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor to approve a private Bill. Petitioners are required to advertise in the *Alberta Gazette* and in a newspaper published in Alberta. They submit proof of advertising, their petition and a draft Bill to Parliamentary Counsel on or before the 15th day following the beginning of a session. The Clerk advertises the deadline for receiving petitions prior to session's opening.

Parliamentary Counsel ensures that draft private Bills comply with established criteria for legislation. Normally Parliamentary Counsel consults informally with the petitioner or the petitioner's solicitor, if there is one, during the drafting stage to make suggestions. Parliamentary Counsel also reports to the Private Bills Committee on the Bill's purposes and any unusual features of or powers requested in the Bill.

The chair of the Private Bills Committee presents to the Assembly, usually on the same day, all petitions received for private Bills. On a subsequent day the chair moves that the petitions be deemed to have been read and received, following which the chair of the Private Bills Committee scrutinizes the petitions and reports to the Assembly whether the petitions comply with Standing Orders.

Following the chair's report the sponsors of private Bills may introduce those Bills in the Assembly for first reading. Petitions that have not complied with Standing Orders may proceed only if the Private Bills Committee recommends that the relevant Standing Order be waived and the Assembly agrees. Following introduction every private Bill is referred to the Private Bills Committee.

The petitioners and their solicitors, if they have retained counsel, are advised when to appear before the Private Bills Committee. Normally the petitioner or solicitor outlines the background of the Bill and presents evidence. Witnesses give evidence under oath. Members of the committee ask questions of the petitioner or solicitor, who may make a closing statement. Prior to closing discussion, any objectors or intervenors have an opportunity to speak. The committee considers the merits of each Bill, sometimes in camera, and then recommends to the Assembly that the Bill proceed, not proceed or proceed with amendments.

The chair reports the committee's decision on each Bill under Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees and asks for the Assembly's concurrence in the report. Upon the concurrence of the Assembly, any Bill receiving a favourable report from the committee goes on the Order Paper for second reading and proceeds in the same fashion as a public Bill.

A committee member who has a personal interest in a private Bill must declare that interest and decline from voting on that Bill.

# Interparliamentary Relations

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## Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

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### 112. Purpose

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The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) fosters understanding and co-operation among parliamentarians from Commonwealth countries and promotes the study of and respect for parliamentary institutions. Each jurisdiction constitutes a branch and has its own executive; membership is made up of those elected to that jurisdiction's parliament. The various branches are grouped geographically into seven regions, each of which is represented on the executive committee of the association and sponsors regional conferences and seminars.

### 113. Alberta Branch

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The Alberta branch consists of all Members of the Legislative Assembly. Following CPA practice, the president of the branch is the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the vice-presidents are the Premier and the Leader of the Official Opposition, and the secretary is the Clerk. Funding for branch operations, including all membership fees and a grant to the CPA general council, is voted by the Assembly in its annual estimates.

### 114. Canadian Region

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The Canadian region of the CPA consists of the Alberta branch, branches representing the parliaments of the other nine provinces and the three territories and the branch representing the federal Parliament.

### 115. Conferences, Seminars and Exchanges

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Delegates from the Alberta branch may attend the following CPA functions:

- The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference, usually held in late summer or early fall and hosted by a different region each year;
- The Canadian regional conference, usually held in the summer and hosted by a different branch each year. Alberta hosted the 2001 conference in Edmonton;

- The Canadian regional seminar, which normally takes place in late fall or early winter and is hosted by a different branch each year.

In addition to these formal gatherings the branches of the Canadian region encourage interbranch exchanges and visits by delegations and individual Members. The Alberta branch receives visitors from other jurisdictions. Members are encouraged when travelling throughout the Commonwealth to visit other branches of the association.

## **116. Publications**

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Members of the Alberta branch receive two quarterly CPA publications. *The Parliamentarian* is published by the CPA secretariat and contains articles, book reviews and bibliographies on parliamentary and constitutional topics as well as reports of major proceedings in Commonwealth parliaments. *Canadian Parliamentary Review* reports on conferences, seminars, appointments and related matters of interest to Canadian members.

The secretariat and the secretary general of the CPA also publish newsletters at regular intervals. These contain news about parliamentary and political events in the Commonwealth and association activities.

The annual report of the Alberta branch is published in the spring as part of the Legislative Assembly Office's annual report.

## **117. Further Information**

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Further details about the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association may be found in the booklet *Commonwealth Parliamentary Association: Aims, Organization, Activities*, which the Speaker's office distributes to all Members.

## **118. Other Interparliamentary Associations**

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The Assembly has involvement in a number of other interparliamentary associations and organizations, including the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF); the National Conference of State Legislatures, U.S.A. (NCSL); the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) and various other twinning and exchange programs.

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